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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

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TOP 10

For what it's worth, here's some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

JUSTIN BRIGGS

- ECOLI-Big Stupid Ape (Police Test)-EP
- INVASION-LP
- CRIMINAL DAMAGE-No Solution-LP
- ACTS OF SEDITION-Crown Victoria-EP
- AFTER THE BOMBS- both EPs
- TYVEK-Summer Burns-2x7"
- FY FAN-Levande Lik-EP
- V/A-Warning Vinyl Fanzine-EP
- HOMOSTUPIDS-The Edge-EP
- INFIERNO DE COBARDES-Ciudad Monstruosa-EP

TIM BROOKS

- SPECTRES-Cold War-EP
- VIOLENT ARREST-EP
- CRIMINAL DAMAGE-No Solution-LP
- THE RED DONS-Death to Idealism-LP
- 86 MENTALITY-Final Exit-EP
- THE BUSY SIGNALS-LP
- FLYING OVER-Danger Boy-EP
- ARTIMUS PYLE-Tonight Is the End of Your Way-EP
- FY FAN-Levande Lik-EP
- THE SUBHUMANS-The Internal Riot-LP

MITCH CARDWELL

- CRIME-Exalted Masters-LP
- TYVEK-Summer Burns-2x7"
- RAXOLA-LP
- HUE BLANC'S JOYLESS ONES-Arriere Garde-LP
- THE BUSY SIGNALS-LP
- TERRIBLE TWOS-A + A-EP
- HOMOSTUPIDS-The Edge-EP
- THE HIPSHAKES-I'm Gone-EP
- THE JAILBIRDS-Going to Stab the Killer Gang!!-LP
- V/A-Pære Punk-LP

ROB COONS

- CRIMINAL DAMAGE-No Solution-LP
- THE BUSY SIGNALS-LP
- ARTIMUS PYLE-Tonight Is the End of Your Way-EP
- ECOLI-Big Stupid Ape (Police Test)-EP
- FY FAN-Levande Lik-EP
- VIOLENT ARREST-EP
- EVERYTHING FALLS APART-Tension-EP
- BORED TO DEATH-EP
- CROSS LAWS-Ancient Rites-EP
- CROSSED EYES-Rattled-EP

PAUL CURRAN

TRAVELING THE WORLD

JONATHAN FLOYD

- THE BUSY SIGNALS-LP
- CRIMINAL DAMAGE-No Solution LP
- THE HIPSHAKES-I'm Gone EP
- HOMOSTUPIDS -The Edge EP
- PINK RAZORS-First Degree EP
- THE RIFF RANDELLS-Double Cross CD
- SHELLSHAG-Destroy Me I'm Yours LP
- TULSA-Sour Digs LP
- Gonerfest IV
- Underground Railroad To Candyland-live

LAYLA GIBBON

- HOMOSTUPIDS-The Edge-EP
- V/A-Pære Punk-LP
- PYLON-Gyrate-CD
- CRIMINAL DAMAGE-No Solution-LP
- THE BUSY SIGNALS-LP
- TELEVISION PERSONALITIES-LP
- TYVEK-Summer Burns-2x7"
- CROSS LAWS-Ancient Rites-EP
- WHITE LUNG-Local Garbage-EP
- ACTS OF SEDITION-EP / FY FAN-EP

CHRIS HUBBARD

- ECOLI-Big Stupid Ape (Police Test)-EP
- RAXOLA-LP
- AFTER THE BOMBS-both EPs
- V/A-Warning Vinyl Fanzine-EP
- FY FAN-Levande Lik-EP
- PYLON-Gyrate-CD
- THE MOB-May Inspire Revolutionary Acts-CD
- SLEEPING AT THE POPES-Beaten Battered & Bruised-EP
- CHRONIC SEIZURE / WARKRIME / HELLSHOCK / DUSTHEADS / SOCIAL CIRCKLE / MIKA MIKO-live

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TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl or CD-only releases to the address on the previous page. See Demos section for where to send tapes & CD-Rs.

KENNY KAOS

- THE DANGERMEN-You Are Defeated-EP
- FLYING OVER-Danger Boy-EP
- THE BUSY SIGNALS-LP
- PINK RAZORS-First Degree-EP
- HOLLYWOOD-Girl?-EP
- THE SKITZOS!-Faster! Louder! Better!-EP
- THE ADORKABLES-In the After Hours-EP
- THE MONEYCHANGERS-Cry Baby Cry-EP
- THE HANGOUTS/SOMETHING FIERCE-split EP
- DEMOB-Crime Through Time-LP

CAROLYN KEDDY

- THE JAILBIRDS-Going to Stab the Killer Gang!!-LP
- COFFIN BOUND-Walkin Out On You-EP
- HUE BLANC'S JOYLESS ONES-LP
- THE HIPSHAKES-I'm Gone-EP
- TYVEK-Summer Burns-2x7"
- HOMOSTUPIDS-The Edge-EP
- THE RED DONS-Death to Idealism-LP
- WHITE LUNG-EP / THE BUSY SIGNALS-LP
- REVEREND BEAT-MAN-CD
- *Dreams to Remember:Legacy of Otis Redding*-DVD

RAY LUJAN

- BACKSEAT VIRGINS-Born Again-CD
- CLOSET FAIRIES-Ghetto Girls-EP
- THE RIFF RANDELLS-Double Cross-CD
- SOAPBOX PARADOX-Adventures in Misadventure-CD
- WHITE LUNG-EP / CAR BOMB DRIVER-Evacuate-CD
- COME ON FEEL-Red Heart Beat-EP
- PINK RAZORS-First Degree-EP / TULSA-LP
- NICE BOYS-Very Mary-EP
- COATHANGERS-Never Wanted You-EP
- CAPGUNS 'N' COKE/THE GRIZZLY ENDS-split CD

ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

- CRIMINAL DAMAGE-No Solution-LP
- TYVEK-2x7" / FY FAN-EP
- TULSA-Sour Digs-LP
- SPECTRES-EP / ACTS OF SEDITION-EP
- RAXOLA-LP
- THE SUBHUMANS-The Internal Riot-LP
- THE RED DONS-Death to Idealism-LP
- VENA CAVA-LP
- BERGENFIELD FOUR-To the Judge-EP
- INVASION-LP

BRUCE ROEHRS

- 86 MENTALITY-EP / VIOLENT ARREST-EP
- THE RANDUMBS-It's About Time…Again-45
- ALTERNATE ACTION-We're Not Like You-EP
- CROSS LAWS-Ancient Rites-EP
- ECOLI-EP / FY FAN-EP
- CROTCH ON FIRE-Anarchist Panthers-EP
- BROKEN-At The Border-EP
- SUBURBAN LOCKDOWN-Laid to Waste-CD
- DANNY GLOVER-Lethal Weapon-EP
- HELLSHOCK/AGE/STORMCROW/DOPE CHARGE-live

CISSIE SCURLOCK

- INFIERNO DE COBARDES-Ciudad Monstruosa-EP
- FY FAN-Levande Lik-EP
- TYVEK-Summer Burns-2x7"
- ECOLI-Big Stupid Ape (Police Test)-EP
- RAXOLA-LP
- INVASION-LP / CHRONIC SEIZURE-live
- ACTS OF SEDITION-Crown Victoria-EP
- CRIMINAL DAMAGE-No Solution-LP
- THE BUSY SIGNALS-LP
- CROSS LAWS-Ancient Rites-EP

MARTIN SORRONDEGUY

- FY FAN-Levande Lik-EP / VIOLENT ARREST-EP
- TROPIEZO-El Manuel de La Perfecta-CD
- CRIMINAL DAMAGE-No Solution-LP
- CROSSED EYES-Rattled-EP
- ECOLI-Big Stupid Ape (Police Test)-EP
- V/A-Warning Vinyl Fanzine-EP
- INFIERNO DE COBARDES-Ciudad Monstruosa-EP
- EVERYTHING FALLS APART-Tension-EP
- ARTIMUS PYLE-Tonight Is the End of Your Way-EP
- ACTS OF SEDITION-Crown Victoria-EP

ZINE TOP TEN

- *Always Never Fun #2*
- *Copperbones #2*
- *Distort #16*
- *Equalizing Distort vol.7, #4*
- *Prisoner's Dilemma #2*
- *Profane Existence #54*
- *Radio Rezija #1*
- *Rad Party #38*
- *Razorcake #40*
- *Upheaval #12*

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A WHOLE CRAPLOAD OF MRR BACK ISSUES...

#153/Feb '96. Snort, Hatchetface, Little Ugly Girls, ADZ, Oxymoron, NOTA, Stun Guns, Surfin' Turnips, Gutfiddle, Kasen Monster, Dimestore Haloes.

#156 pt 1/May '96. Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#174/Nov '97. Stratford Mercenaries, Lickity Split, Bladder, Piss Shivers, Barnhills, In/Humanity. "Education" theme issue.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, DDI, Bonecrusher, Normals, All Bets Off, Stiletto Boys, Summerjack, Cell Block 5.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Umlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, 3rd Party, No Class.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres.

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#199/Dec '99. Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Curse, Gee Vaucher, Hers Never Existed, Aaron Cometbus, Active distro, Toxic Narcotic, MRR catalogue #100-200.

#201/Feb '00. Beerzone, Towards An End, Daybreak, "Best Punk Singles of the '90s," the WTO riots in Seattle.

#202/March '00. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, Gore Gore Girls, the Catheters.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#221/Oct '01. The G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11, Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#231/Aug '02. Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

#232/Sept '02. "No Future" article, Lost, Fartz, Sell Outs, Razors Edge, Stakeout, Dillinger Four, All or Nothing HC, Fleshies, Bridge Nine Records, Akashic Books, Liberty.

#233/Oct '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235/Dec '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, *Artcore*, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola & San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, *Snakepit* zine , Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, *Trust* zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#248/Jan '04. Discharge, Superhelicopter, Jed Whitey, Black Friday '29, Find Him And Kill Him, The Lids, Impratical Cockpit, Face Up To It, History Of Maximum Rocknroll Radio.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/Mar '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl, Vrah.

#252/May '04. Fucked Up, Firestarter, Inepsy, Laukaus, Great Clearing Off, Radio Reelers, Extreme Noise Records, 46 Short, The State, John The Baker, Free Verse, Chrystaei Branchaw photos.

#253/June '04. Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, scene reports from Portland, Boston and Germany.

#255/Aug '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/Sep '04. The Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04 The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, The Boss Martians, Reactionary Three, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, The Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, AI, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

#262/March '05. Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scenes.

#263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

#264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

#265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

#266/July '05. The Carbonas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report, photos.

#267/August '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech and New Zealand scene reports.

#268/September '05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida Scene Report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

#269/October '05. Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stalag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

#270/November '05. Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oil!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

#271/December '05. Besthöven, Abductee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged / Criminal IQ / Kick'n'Punch Records. Scene reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

#272/January '06. Conga Fury, Let's Grow, Frustration, Bastardass, Icons of Filth, Burial, Hrydjuverk, Cranked Up!, Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis, Tropezio, *Baboon of Sickness* zine. Scene reports: Austin, France, Michigan, Larry Wolfley photos.

#273/February '06. Fuses, Endstand, Out Cold, Pedestrians, Acts of Sedition, BadEatingHabits, Western Addiction, Jesus Fucking Christ, Toxic Waste, Punk photo spread, St. Louis, USA & Brighton, UK scene reports.

#274/March '06. Best of 2005, Formaldehyde Junkies, Brutal Knights, Kansan Uutiset, Hatred Surge, A-Heads, Manikin, Upinatem, Hips, Boston scene report, Punk photo spread.

#275/April '06. History of ABC No Rio (Part One), Ringers, Missbrukarna, '90s garage punk scumpit, Anatomi-71, After the Bombs, Rubella Ballet, RIP Pig Champion, Ricky Adam interview and photographs, Sean McGhee, Hard Skin US tour diary.

#276/May '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part One), History of ABC No Rio (Part Two), Vitamin X Asian Pacific tour diary, Soviet Valves Suburban Death Machine, Frustrations, George Hurchalla, Scene reports: Czech Republic and Greece.

#277/June '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part Two), Imperial Leather, Boom Boom Kid, Vitamin X Asian Pacific Tour (part two), "How to Make It Big!" by the Phantom Surfers, Magrudergrind, Poland.

#278/July '06. Billy Childish, Death Token, The First Step, Ramsey Kanaan of AK Press, Headache City, Deconditioned, Under Pressure, Insuiciety, Instigators, Malaysia Scene, Bay Area Scene Pics.

#279/August '06. Mika Miko, The Fall, Cardiac Arrest, Digger & the Pussycats, Massmord, Insect Warfare, The Astronauts, Canary Islands Photo Spread, Four Slicks, The Fallout, PAWNS, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, & Umeå, Sweden scenes.

#280/September '06. Hjerte Stop, Grupo Sub-1, Desperate Bicycles, Bill Daniel interview and photo spread, APF Brigade, Disconvenience, Southkore Fest photo spread, Rosenbombs, Up the Voltage, Euro photo spread, Svartenbrandt, Asheville, NC & world wide punk scene reports.

#281/October '06. Out With a Bang, Redd Kross, Derek Lyn Plastic, We March, Alan Milman, Rat Traps, Blood Robots, The Scarred, Gilbert Switzer, Japan & US photo spreads, Sweden & UK scene reports.

#282/November '06. The Feelers, PESD, Toxic Ephex, Auktion, Bruise Violet, *Trust* fanzine, The Homosexuals, The Effigies, Rat City Riot, New York City & North Carolina scene reports.

#283/December '06. Jay Reatard interview & photos, Crimes Against Humanity Records, A Touch of Hysteria, Doris Fanzine, Kvoteringen, '90s Punk Scumpit Part II, Black Chrome, The Dirty Water Club, photos, Tokyo scene report.

#284/January '07. Margaret Thrasher, 924 Gilman at 20 Years, Order of the White Rose, Regress, Subhumans (UK) Part One, Blank Its, Condenada, Genetic Control, photos, Syracuse & San Diego scene reports.

#285/February '07. Randy "Biscuit" Turner of the Big Boys & the early Texas punk scene, Lemuria, Ruin, Subhumans (UK) Part Two, The Blinds, Tranzistors, ANS, Riot This, La Piovra, Bay Area scene pics, Barcelona, Spain scene report.

#286/March '07. Best of 2006, Smartut Kahol Lavan, Electric Kisses, Holy Shit!, Lost Cherrees Part One, Go!, Kraljevo, Serbia, and Bakersfield, CA scene reports.

#287/April '07. Alicja Trout, Keith Rosson (*Avow* zine), Crap Corps, The Vicious, Scum System Kill, Lost Cherrees Part Two, Restless Youth, SBV, Australia, Kyiv, Ukraine, and Pittsburgh, PA scene reports.

#288/May '07. Clockcleaner, Pisschrist, The Rats (Sweden), Conflict (US), The Viletones, Violent Tumor, Czech Republic and East Texas scene reports.

#289/June '07. Ultimo Resorte, Kursk, Masstrauma, Social Circkle, Final Approach, Post Punk Kitchen, Southern Death Cult, Portland Drummers, Timisoara, Copenhagen, and Pampanga scene reports.

#290/July '07. Stormcrow, Merkit, Solid Decline, Monster Squad, Sex Vid, Vivisick, Warkrime, Top Ten, *We're Gonna Fight* zine, White Cross, Berlin scene report.

#291/August '07. *MRR* 25th Anniversary Issue. Martin Sprouse, Tim Yohannon, No Slogan, Ruidosa Inmundicia, Chinese Telephones, Vaseline Children, Anti-System, Dave Roche, 6-page retrospective photo-spread, Kawakami/ Disclose obituary, Brazil scene report.

#292/September '07. New Bloods, Chronic Seizure, Outraged, Geriatric Unit, Active Distribution, Gruk, The Mods, No Defences, The Fakes, Trashies Tour Report, Mexico scene report.

#293/October '07. Punk and Immigration Theme issue w/ interviews, articles, and stories. Anti-You, Loser Life, Political Asylum, Olympia scene report.

#294/November '07. The Hipshakes, Neverending Party, Punk & Immigration article, Finally Punk, La Lucha Para La Justicia en Guatemala, Leftover Crack, AOA.

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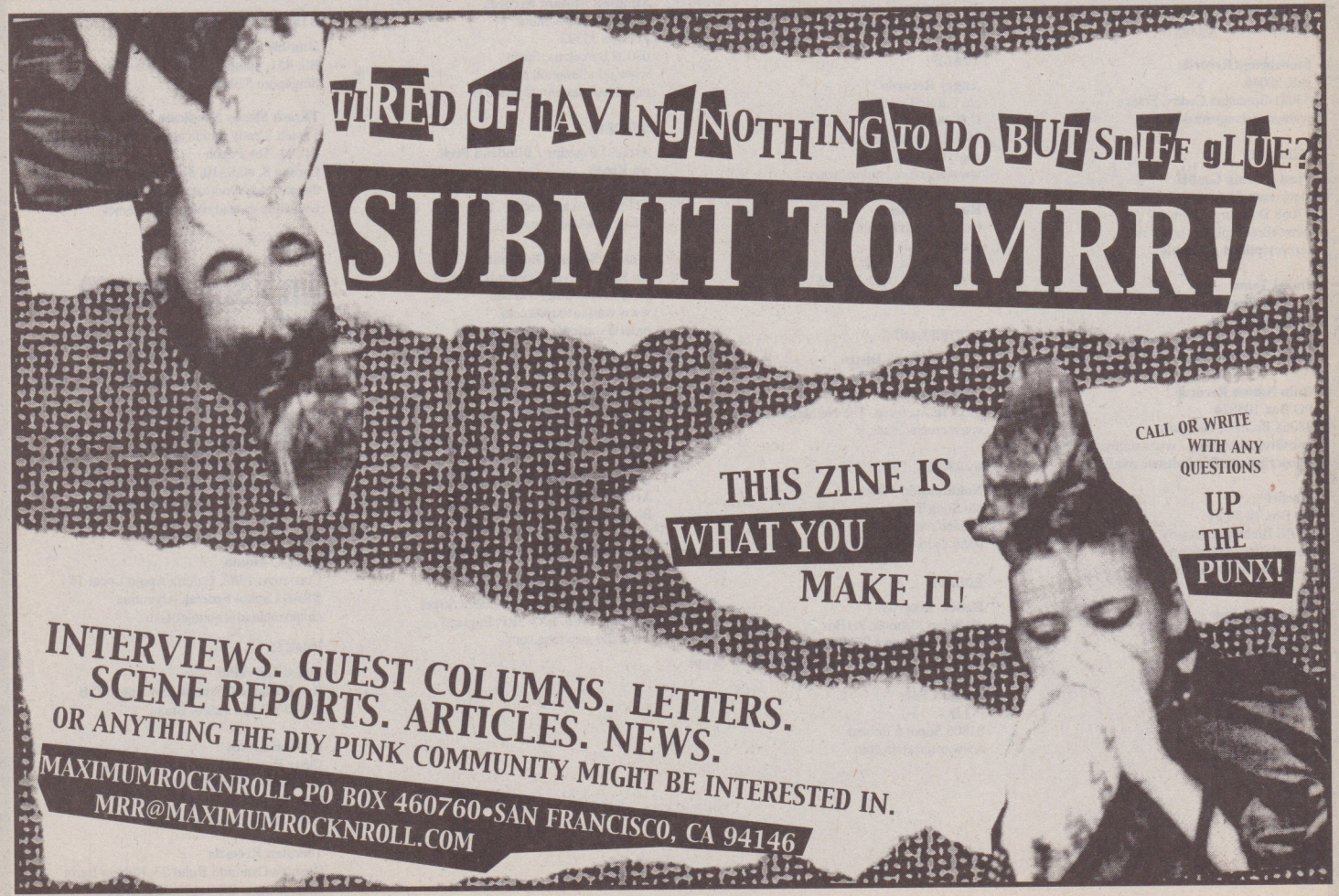

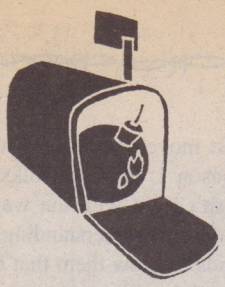

LETTERS

Send letters to MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760, or to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. No response guaranteed.

Dear MRR—
I was deeply saddened to hear about the death of longtime *MRR* contributor and friend Lance Hahn. I know that both the magazine and countless individuals are sure to pay tribute to Lance, probably in this very issue, but I couldn't let the opportunity pass without sharing a brief eulogy of my own.

Unfortunately, I never got to meet Lance in person, which is a fact that I will always regret. He had already been living in Austin for a while by the time I moved to San Francisco, and his decreased travels due to ill health meant that our relationship remained in the realm of email and the telephone. Nonetheless, I corresponded often and at length with Lance in my time coordinating the magazine, and came to rely on this correspondence as an endless source of both motivating enthusiasm and empathetic compassion. In my first months, he sent me a series of encouraging emails, and was one of the people who most made me feel the love and respect of the entire *Maximum Rocknroll* community in a time when I felt like I was in way over my head. Lance was charming, funny, incredibly smart, and punk like no other; I have a folder's worth of emails from him that I could turn into a book as good as practically any written, so much did his natural charisma and intelligence shine through even in electronic form. His prolific writing for the magazine made the idea of "punk scholar" seem totally natural, and his lifelong commitment to DIY ideals makes him one of the most inspiring characters the punk scene has ever produced. Seriously, if we were all a little more like Lance the world would be a significantly better place.

I know that an enormous number of people are deeply grieving his loss, and that the magazine feels his profound absence as well. There is not much I can say to take away the sting of that loss, but I take solace in the fact that in the coming days, months, and years, Lance's music and writing will help comfort many that knew him personally as well as those who knew him through his work. We miss you, brother.
—Golnar Nikpour

MRR—
I just read the review with Loser Life. Overall these guys seem OK and I like their records. However, I take issue with their comments about bands touring with CD-Rs. If a band is making the effort to get out there, they should get the same respect as a band with a record. It's expensive to put out a record, and if a band can't afford it, they shouldn't be looked down upon and get less gas money than the other bands who happen to have vinyl. This kind of elitism isn't healthy. I just chucked my Loser Life records out the window and I'm going to listen to my Slang demo CD-R.
—Furman

Dear Comrade Spinali—
I would love to correct two wrongs committed in your review of the film *This Is England*. I'm four-eyed so I watched it more attentively perhaps. The question for the black skinhead character wasn't whether he was Jamaican or British—it was a dichotomy between Jamaican-ness and Englishness. A fine distinction for a *seppo* I guess, but in the context of the film it's important. And the film universe does contain a reference to an infamous racist band—through a graffiti in one of the backgrounds misspelled its name as "Screwdriver." Otherwise, a skin flick, like a skin flick, might be all right to watch like once. And thanks for your column.

Up the punx, down with punk,
—Shaz / Russia

MRR—
I've never had "Industry Beef," so it is with great relish that I would like to publicly dis Gainesville, Florida's Dead Friends.

I designed the cover for their new 7" on Obscurist Press, a reputable label. As payment I asked for three (3) packages of tempeh from a local producer in Gainesville. Although this is the best tempeh in the world, it's still a pretty great price. I like the band and I didn't have to print the covers. Party Keith did an excellent job masterprinting the design. Here's the problem: Not only have I yet to recieve my tempeh, but the dudes didn't even tell me the record was out, they liked the design, thank you, etc. BULLSHIT, DUDES!

Tone Mahone, Party Keith, Daniel Daytona: the gig is up. I will only accept an apology in the pages of *MRR*, where it will be preserved for posterity. And send me my fucking tempeh.

You're no Kevin Seconds. I'm no Brian Schroeder. But still: weak.
—Mike Taylor
PO Box 28226
Providence, RI 02908

To Spencer Horne—
I don't even know where to start. Honestly, after reading your guest column in the November 2007 *MRR*, I was left wondering why they would ever resort to printing something so completely devoid of a clear argument. In the column, you express what I'd assume to be the feeling that racist, homophobic, and sexist people deserve free speech and the other rights the United States Constitution is supposed to guarantee. Or perhaps it was that we need to surround ourselves with these people to understand why they're the way they are.

But please, tell me in what world exactly are you living in? It's not just certain people who are sexist, homophobic, or racist, it's the entire system. Especially here, in the good ol' USA, we're immersed in these ideas and the people who think it's normal to feel them. And so please, please, please let me know if I'm wrong, but here I was for the past nine years under the impression that punk rock was something made up of people who rejected the standards of contemporary society; people who built something new out of the old based on the injustices of mainstream music and institutionalized schooling and everything else we're forced into from birth.

On that note, I think it's obvious that Gilman was never meant to be this imaginary wonderland where everything works itself out. It was an intentional space put together for and by kids who wanted something of their own, because at Gilman there are little girls and queers and immigrants and fuck you if you have a problem with that. We have to deal with

your violent ideologies everywhere else, so sorry if it offends you that we wanted one place where we could feel comfortable.

Maybe I wouldn't have been so offended if it wasn't so goddamn obvious that this column was written by a straight white male—someone who for the most part, doesn't experience a lot of prejudices. Unfortunately, you're dead fucking wrong if you think it's irrational to want something other than racial slurs, misogyny, and gay-bashing at a space like Gilman. 'Cause for some of us, it's the only place we have to escape the outside world. It's places like Gilman, The Masque, The Cuckoo's Nest, CBGB's, and Bernie's Distillery that gave kids somewhere to go in the first place, and they're disappearing fast. Or else being taken over by individuals such as yourself.

I'd also like to remind you that Gilman is a collective, and if you've ever attended a show there you have a membership card. Come to a meeting and bring up your concerns! But don't be offended if people laugh their asses off. You know, freedom of speech and all...
—rugratdaggerkaos!

Rugrat,

MRR *decided to run Spencer's column because I thought he raised some interesting points about censorship and its effect on racism, sexism, homophobia, etc. I don't necessarily agree with everything he said and I'm not going to try and speak for him, but I feel like you might have misinterpreted some of the column's key ideas—to me, it didn't praise or support slurs or the people who use them; rather it seemed to argue that banning such speech was not an effective tactic against bigotry. Your point that "safe spaces" are important in the punk scene, however, is well taken (though I'm not sure I'd agree CBGB's was such a space!). One more thing: it seems to me that if one supports "freedom of speech," then one must support* all *speech, not just the speech with which one agrees—in that sense, then yes, racist, homophobic, and sexist people "deserve" free speech as much as anyone else—otherwise it ain't really "freedom of speech," y'know?*
—Chris

Dear MRR—
Our friend Denis "Top" Abramov died in his sleep on October 26, 2007, at age 38. He had been one of the pioneers of political hardcore punk here in St. Petersburg. He wrote lyrics for bands including Bondzinsky, Spitfire, and Beerocephals (Birotsefaly), also helped run the latter's affairs as an "ideologist" before they broke up in 1993. Denis contributed reviews for our punk zine *Nozhi I Vilki*. He also worked on a book of memoirs about being a punk rocker in 1980s Leningrad. He turned many impressionable young minds to great (and sometimes not so great) music, has always been distrustful of any and all authority or cliché, and didn't mind appearing more clever than other people. I'd last seen him this past August—he was going to see NOFX, and was very excited about it. I still have photocopied early 1990s issues of *MRR* that I got off of him. May he rest in peace.
—Szarapow.

Dear MRR Folks—
I am writing because I need help with a dilemma. I live in a smallish city that has historically been know as a conservative stronghold of Pennsylvania—Lancaster. Yuppie art-scene gentrification and a Democrat as Mayor has changed that somewhat, but the activist scene is still small enough that it seems that there aren't enough of us to go around.

I lived in Philly for a while, and most of the radical and anti-authoritarian groups—Food Not Bombs, Books Through Bars, ARA, etc.—had enough people to make their efforts sustainable. Newly forming groups had the task of getting space in folks' schedules, folks who were already convinced the work was worthwhile.

Here in Lancaster our fledgling Food Not Bombs has served once as of this letter. The Free Market has been redistributing unwanted stuff for about six months. Our organic urban community garden, Dig It, has a much larger lot this year and distributes low cost veggies on a regular basis as well as collecting compost from apartment dwellers. The IWW is one of the largest in the region per capita, and there is momentum building to get a chapter of the Anarchist Black Cross going to do prisoner support. The problem is that the same core group of people is doing the lion's share of work in all these groups. Some of us are starting to get burnt out. I want all these groups to thrive and grow, but when it's the same people giving up much of their free time, and picking up the slack on things that others have falsely committed to, it gets discouraging.

Most of the time I feel like it's not a matter of figuring out where the motivated folks are and getting them involved, but rather a matter of convincing if not downright influencing and recruiting folks to get involved. If all I had to do was go find the malcontents, marginalized, and downtrodden and tell them where and when meetings were happening, and they showed up and got involved, I would be alright with that, but it feels like there is so much more to do in order to convince people that maybe getting fucked up, socializing, and fucking are not the totality of worthwhile activities.

Why don't I just move somewhere cooler, you might ask. Reason 1: Younger folks who know something isn't right with the way the world is organized need understanding ears and hearts and minds to show them that life is still worth living and there is necessary work to be done to make positive changes locally. Reason 2: The mainstream in small communities wants radicals to leave. Reason 3: Any time a creative, motivated anarchist or punk leaves a small town for one of the countercultural meccas, they add the equivalent of a shot glass of water to an Olympic-sized swimming pool when they get where they're going. The place they leave, however, experiences the loss of a bucketful of water from an inflatable pool.

So to get to the main reason why I'm writing: I would really like to hear from small town punks, organizers, radicals and activists who would like to share strategies about how to get and keep more people involved in community projects like those I've mentioned above. What sustains you? What keeps you in lesser-known locales where, it seems to me, this work is almost more crucial than in major cities? I will write back to all respondents. I am sending this letter to multiple forums.
Peace,
—Chip
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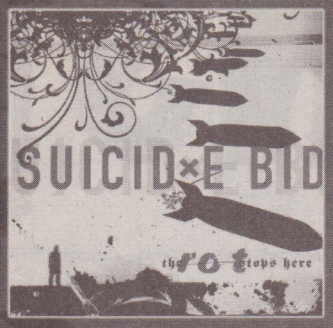

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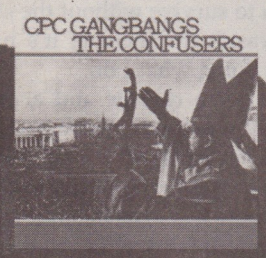

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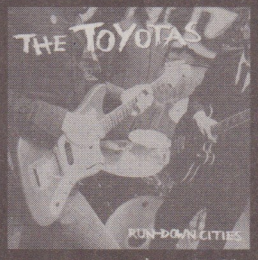

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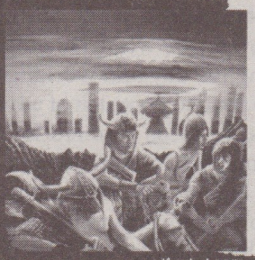

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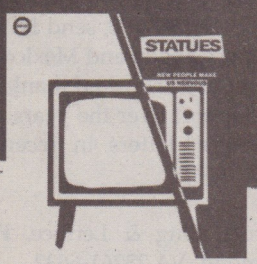

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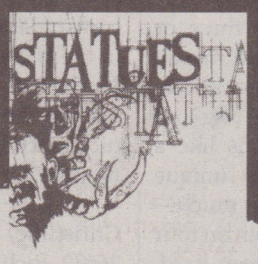

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COLUMNS

I've been MIA for months now and I'm really not sure where the time has gone. The days are literally slipping by. Stig is now ten months old and awesome as ever! It's been months since I've managed to get a column written and I cannot believe that it's been a year now since the last issue of *Slug & Lettuce* came out. I knew that I was going to take a short break, but I never intended for it to be this long.

I have been plugging away on the 20th anniversary issue though, trying to make it something special, and it's in its final stages as I write this. It's an all photo issue—representing 20 years of *S&L* band photography. I've been talking for years about doing a book. Originally I wanted to do a book on early '90s punk in NYC. Then more recently I thought it would be awesome to coincide with the 20-year anniversary, a "20 Years of *S&L* Photos" book (which would end up including the NYC years, but also much more). Well all of these projects have been thoroughly overwhelming and due to already being spread way too thin with projects and time, it just hasn't happened. So I decided to do 20 years of *S&L* photos in the anniversary issue, and even that was quite a bit more of a project that I think I anticipated. I thought it would be easy, after all the photos have all been chosen already, and many of them are scanned to disk. But the one thing I totally overlooked or underestimated was just how many thousands of photos I have taken and how many thousands of photos have been printed in the zine. Wow.

As I went through disk after disk of previously edited photos, and then looked at old issues to see what was missing and search out certain photos and certain bands that needed to be represented, I was really overwhelmed with just how many bands and how many photos I was dealing with. I realized that there was no way to being to even start to cover all of them. And the editing began. It has taken days and days and hours and hours of placing, cropping, labeling, and then making smaller and deleting and cramming all of these photos into the pages. It's been fun. And I hope that this also might act as a huge step in the direction of a book. In the meantime I have what I feel is an offering back to everyone. I've struggled over the past year with the idea of zine publishing, lamented over continually rising postage rates and diminishing ad revenue. I have contemplated the future of my zine and I still have come to no conclusion. All I could do was get this one issue out and then I figure the next step will become apparent in time. Thankfully, at a time when so many long-running zines are folding, we still have our *MRR*. Don't take it for granted.

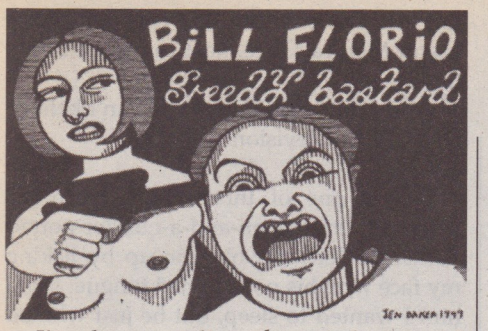
Stig is an amazing kid. He's well behaved, charming, sweet, and really quite easy as far as babies go (so everyone tells me). I love him more than you can imagine. That mother's love thing is something fierce. I returned to work full time at the photo lab and between hanging out with Stig during the day and working at night, I have little time to do much of anything else. The obsessive focus required for the zine is hard to come by in more than short spurts that I can barely plan or count on.

And so the process has taken longer than I would have liked, but I keep plugging away at everything doing the best I can. Without ever getting more than three or four hours of sleep at a time, I find myself content to hang out at home on a Friday night and the idea of dragging Stig out when he's asleep no longer seems like a good idea. So, other than a few unique times, we haven't been getting out much—to shows in particular. Erik has been on tour for the past month, which has been hard, although we have managed better than I had expected and feared, thanks in no small part to the awesome friends who Stig-sit him while I am at work. But with Stig-sitters 40 hours a week, it hardly makes sense to then get more Stig-watchers on the weekend. And so I have been forsaking going out on the rare occasion that I otherwise might have. I was really super-tweaked over the idea of Erik being away on tour. I have also always hated the idea that we would have to dramatically change our lives once we had a kid. And so while the zine has been dormant, I'm still at it, and while touring can not happen non-stop, at least we have some proof that we can keep at it and keep on keeping on, which is an exciting and important revelation. I would love to be able to just stay home with Stig and be a mom, and yet I also can't imagine not working and doing my thing. I am not in a position to survive without the job, but even if it wasn't the income, it's hard to imagine not doing what I do.

Throw in some chronic and acute tendonitis in my wrist and elbow and things have been even more of a challenge. The hand therapist wanted to attribute it to the baby, but I knew it was as much to do with the intense photo work with the computer and mouse at work. And then of course I completely overlooked perhaps the most obvious culprit—the camera—and the hundreds or thousands of photos that I take at one show, or in one weekend at a fest. Yeah, I forgot about that. So my limbs have been failing me, which is frustrating and even further limiting, but I'm plugging on as best as I can. And I don't plan to quit or give up anything, anytime soon.

In the meantime, if you want to get a copy of *Slug & Lettuce* #90, send $1.50 within the US, $3 to Canada and Mexico and $4 for the rest of the world. And thanks everyone for the support over the years and the nice encouraging letters in recent quite months!

Chris(tine) c/o Slug & Lettuce, PO Box 26632, Richmond, VA 23261-6632
chris1slug@hotmail.com



I've been reading this twelve-pound book about the history of the mafia for the past two months now, lugging it with me everywhere. It's going to be another ten or twelve long subway rides or nights I'm having trouble falling asleep before I finish it. All in all, when I read about the rise and supposed fall of something like organized crime it makes me think a lot about human nature in general. Part of the allure of criminal activity in America are the underlying principles of the "American Dream"—Horatio Alger "rags to riches" or Disney movie bullshit. Crime was a serious option in the days of the depression, a time where one could easily starve to death, whereas in the latter half of the twentieth century in America, no one actually starves to death. In fact when you think of dirt-poor people in urban ghettos or in the mountains of say Appalachia, you think of obese people eating a bucket of fried chicken every night for dinner.

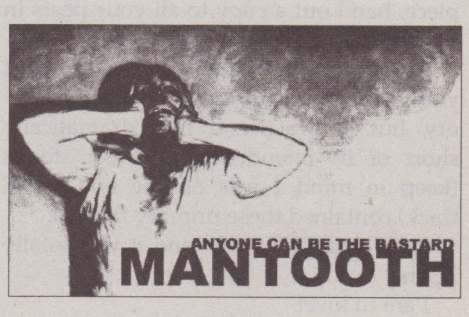
We all know the American psyche is a little psychopathic, it always has been. I think I mentioned in another column how The American Revolution was somewhat of a despicable gamble—thousands of risking their lives and everything they had toiled for just to rid themselves of a few taxes; ignoring the fact that not only did they have a higher quality of life than the government levying the taxes, but they weren't taxed anywhere near as much as any country in Europe. The good life, relative to the bad life at that time had already been achieved. If you ever really want to understand the difference between Americans and Canadians, read a little history. The history of Canada has got to be one of the most boring books I've ever tried to read. American's on the other hand, seem to love creating hurdles for themselves to jump over, or fall over.

This brings me to the whole idea of hierarchy and status. I, and I'm sure a lot of the people reading this, make a conscious effort to not make issues of status a major part of my existence. I'm not saying some sort of communistic revolution would help here, I just think too many people put a lot of thought into counting their cache of purchases as a substitute for actual feelings of fulfillment, such as inner peace and strong relationships with others. They put a lot of stock in their "secure jobs" and "wise investments," as if somehow they have built a house of bricks and will be rewarded for living their lives like people in an insurance commercial. In reality, if you cut all this kind of crap down to its bare essentials, they live in fear. Fear of growing old, fear of death, fear of unreal poverty, and that the loss of their status will lose them their friends who are overly concerned with the same things.

Meanwhile, in the pursuit of this house 80 miles from where they work, kids are setting an example of being a total prole in the name of financial independence. It's not really a wonder that a lot of them have started this whole new pot headed generation where they live at home until they're 40 while their parents drop dead working at a department store after partially retiring.

It is funny how I got all these thoughts from comparing godfathers of the '40s and '50s to those of the '80s and '90s, but the pattern sticks. The American way killed the mafia as much as the desperation of the depression-era built it. When this country was formed, there was a mission, to build, to expand, to prosper. It worked, by 1950 we eclipsed all the powers that we're our original oppressors. Then not only did everyone get lazy, they felt it would last forever no matter how little we did to keep it going. A George Bush in 1948 would not fly as a candidate for president; in 1948 someone like John Gotti would be executed for his public persona. In fact the last godfather who put himself in the public eye was gunned down in front of hundreds of people in Columbus Circle. Why did, the mafia let someone like Gotti help undermine their organization? Because he gave the appearance that he was making everyone a lot of money, and he instilled fear, but the fact was he didn't get it, George Bush is very much like Gotti. It's really not the power of the FBI that brought down the mafia, what brought them down ten notches on the power ladder was the feeling that they needed status. If you want to see an example of someone who did the whole crime business right, look at Vinnie "The Chin" Gigante. You may remember him as the don who showed up to trial in a bathrobe, I believe the *NY Post* headline was "Oddfather" and "Daffy Don." Basically for 30 years the FBI didn't even know he was the boss. While the feds were busting a lot of mafia dons in the 1980s over their gambling and loan sharking businesses, Chin Gigante ran a good part of New York City by controlling many of the major unions involved in construction, garbage removal, the Javits Convention Center, and the Fulton Fish Market. One of the ironies is that mafia activity was probably one of the major reasons New York City was in decline from 1965 until 1995. They not only sucked the city dry, but then hired-in attempts to rejuvenate it. In the late '60s it was decided that the New York Sanitation Department could no longer afford to pick up commercial garbage. The mafia was right there to take full control, which as far as I'm concerned they still have. The city decided it needed a major convention center to attract business and help the hotel industry, the mafia ended up not only building it, but also running it. This is truly the American way of the first half of the twentieth century, and this sort of creative thinking bolstered by strict discipline is why people are so lame nowadays.

Anyhow, I think this is the point where you see people drop out of punk rock, when this whole idea of status overtakes them to the point where they can no longer relate. "I got a wife and kids now, and I'm trying to pay my mortgage." I'm not saying I have anything against it, but personally I'm not buying it. As far as I'm concerned my simple life buys me much more freedom and much more happiness.



Approaching quickly is the three-year anniversary marking my graduation from Higher Education. I received a BA in writing from the University of Pittsburgh for $35,000 and have since enjoyed careers in the following arenas:

Within a 10' by 5' room, tutoring a man who was all at once old, insane, Liberian, and blind,

Amidst the catacombs of chode apparel, inventory and stock duties at The Gap,

In what was probably the breaking point for my sanity, good will towards men, self-respect, etc., etc., disposing of dead rats for a property management firm,

And currently working in a restaurant where I'm "the boss" and responsible for a

staff of about twelve people, most of whom are my friends outside of work

Surprisingly, the last is the least soul crushing of the four, although probably the most awkward and uncomfortable.

I am still quite bitter that the sum of four years toiling in the bowels of academia is a five-figure debt and an inability to find work that weren't these jobs. On the bright side, "bitter" would have been a gross understatement in regards to my outlook on life two years ago, so my mental attitude has recovered leaps and bounds since then.

And yes, I did and still do realize that a) college is a privilege (I am a privileged white male), b) I had a fat chance of "making it" as a writer (but nor did I want to), and c) Pittsburgh is not necessarily teeming with career opportunities (although I wasn't aware of how grim the prospects were until I started looking). The point is not that life is unfair, the short end of the stick, etc., but that I was, like many other people, led to believe that college is a golden ticket for a one way trip out of whatever quagmire of despair one may be wallowing in.

This is not to say that my time spent in college resulted *only* in the disgruntled, withered mass of carbon-based hatred that types before you today, but this was certainly one of the ingredients that I believe has lead to my current mental state. You see, most of what goes on in a "writing class" is "workshopping." You write a piece, hand out a copy to all your peers in the class, and everyone takes turns outlining, as they see it, the faults and triumphs of your little story. This is all very good in theory, but in practice it falls dramatically short of its intended goal. Most stories (keep in mind I was on the non-fiction track) contained these primary themes:

I did drugs one time and it was totally insane!

I am in love!

I thought I was in love but my boyfriend/girlfriend was a total jerk!

I am in the military!

How was I supposed to take seriously any criticism/advice from some jagoff whose only story to tell is about how they got really high and saw god in a bowl of linguini at the Olive Garden? How was I supposed to gauge my craft in relation to someone with an inability to write *anything* besides their sob sob sob, boo hoo hoo ex-relationships? Goddamnit. That word is like forks on stainless steel to me now. Even more nauseating is the fact that my own ex, with whom I was in the same class, wrote a story about *our* relationship—a bunch of romanticized tripe (take that as you will).

Where does this leave me now? Sick of writing and anyone that fancies themselves a "writer." I blame most of this on Dave Eggers, whose books are the literary equivalent to placing one's hand on hip and shooting off a look that says, "Hmmph, you're too stupid to have ever even heard of James Agee, so I just beat off in your shoes." He's impregnated every tool in the universe with the notion that their story *must* be told, but unfortunately left out all the chromosomes that are responsible for making the reader give a shit.

While these harsh judgments seem to be raining down from my high horse and/or soapbox, I feel pretty complacent wallowing in potential hypocrisy believing that I have mentally and physically distanced myself from this whole "scene" altogether. But then again, it has been three years—maybe I should just get over it?

Feel free to point out to me that I will never get anywhere as a "writer" if I'm unwilling to focus on one point for more than five sentences: gregory.mantooth@gmail.com

"Yes," says Jerry Springer to me, as I stand in front of him and about a hundred other people in my new 1970s Starsky & Hutch style yellow/brown leather pimp jacket I just purchased in Compton for under twenty bucks. I was feeling especially studly, with my bleached blonde hair and newly bleached goatee. I had used this stuff called Jolen Creme Bleach for women. It's supposed to get rid of their mustaches, so I figured it would work on me. I was right. A little bit chemically burnt. But right. Women's products are very, very good to me.

"Um," I stammer to Jerry, in his black t-shirt, black slacks, black shoes, black sports jacket, and black everything else, "Why don't you just publicly execute people on your show? For the ratings!"

Jerry looks at me, shocked. So does the audience in The Learning Annex class I was attending. As do the guys running the cameras for *Access Hollywood*.

I think to myself that maybe, just maybe, this time I crossed the line. The look on my friend Monica's face, next to me, confirms this.

And now, years later, I still can't believe he's still on television!

* * *

It was one of those chilly mornings when PJ, my seven-and-a-quarter-pound Yorkshire Terrier, woke me up by licking my face with his poo-stained tongue. I told him I wanted to sleep, but he just whined and licked. I yelled at him to let me sleep, but he just cocked his head funny and moaned. I really wish that one day he'd understand English, like at least half of the city does.

As I walked him outside my building and to the corner, where he likes to do his morning business, I realized I didn't have any toilet paper. Or paper towels. Or even a baggie. I had nothing to clean his feces with.

I began to drag PJ back to the building to get something, so I wouldn't get a fine or go to jail, when he started to do the "I gotta go poop now" twirl. His ears went back behind his head, his nubby tail down, and he spun in circles like those dirty people who go to Grateful Dead concerts.

I tried to stop him, but it was no use. The faucet was open.

After he was done, I looked around for something to clean up his crap with. My pockets were empty, as was my brain. I hadn't had my coffee yet.

Then I saw it. In a box. Right on the corner. The perfect tool. A Learning Annex guide. It would work great.

I went and got one, dragging PJ with me, and then went back to clean up my dog's mess. As I did so, I looked at the slick color cover of the free newsprint magazine. It advertised new classes, with such guest teachers as John Berendt, the guy who wrote *Midnight In The Garden Of Good And Evil*, you know, that movie with that kid from *One Crazy Summer* in it, and a class hosted by none other than Jerry Springer, as well as one by renowned psychic Sylvia Browne.

As PJ's poop smeared on the faces of the TV host, author, and psychic, I mentally reminded myself to pick up another copy later. I had seen The Learning Annex magazine around for years, but always ignored it. Until now. When it came in handy for something besides "adult education." Whatever that is. Why any grown-up would want to go back to school is beyond me. To have to sit in a class, take tests, get beat-up by bullies on the bus, and pee in your pants is a drag. Besides, I still have

dreams I can't find my locker or am late for a test. To actually have to live that for real again ranks up there with colon surgery for me.

A few days later I found myself calling The Learning Annex to take some courses. I don't know why I did, but I suspect it was because I felt the need to punish myself like my therapist said I was doing lately. Adult education. That was it. And it seemed safer than S&M. Besides, the thought of a red rubber ball in my mouth kind of scares me.

* * *

"How To Drive Your Woman Wild in Bed," taught by "erotic video star" Mistress Poison was the first course I signed up for. Just because it sounded good, the chick looked hot, and I figured if I took that course, I'd know everything, anyway, and then be able to pat myself on the back for being so smart.

I arrived at The Mechanic Institute Of New York on 44th Street fifteen minutes after the course had begun. I was late because of stomach cramps and the loss of direction I usually experience when traveling above 14th Street.

"Sit down anywhere," said this tough-looking blonde in a real tight dress, with huge hooters and an evil grin.

I sat down in the back of the classroom. On a chair attached to a small desk. I sat where I used to when I was a kid. It was the best place not to get asked questions, and to take naps.

"You're late," quipped the teacher, as she stood in front of a green chalkboard, grasping a rubber dildo.

I started to tell her that I had the 'rhea and got lost.

"Just shut up and listen," was her response.

I looked around the class. The "students" there were a combination of old men, Jerry Lewis-looking guys in suits, body builders, postal workers, and cab drivers. Lots of cab drivers. They looked at me. A guy in a new 1970s *Starsky & Hutch*-style yellow/brown leather pimp jacket I just purchased in Compton for under twenty bucks. With a blonde goatee. And blonde hair. I didn't fit in.

"As I was saying before the brief interruption," said Mistress Poison, glaring at me, "your problem is you don't have enough sex, or jerk off enough."

"Really," said this huge body-builder guy, seated against the right wall, looking all confused.

"That is correct," said the teacher, who would have won my vote for the Van Halen "Hot For Teacher" contest, if they were ever to hold one.

"Well," explained the muscleman, "I've been into celibacy for three years. I work in a topless joint. All the women I come into contact with think I'm gay."

"Go out and fuck," was the teacher's response, "and masturbate a lot. Next question?"

Obviously I had missed an exciting fifteen minutes of class. We were already into jerking off and fucking. Damn.

"Wado they want?" some smelly guy managed to spit out.

"What do who want?" asked the teacher.

"Da ladies," was the guy's response. I felt bad for him. The last thing he probably fucked was a camel. Hell, the last thing anyone in the room had probably fucked was some kind of livestock. These people were taking a course on "How To Drive Your Woman Wild in Bed". And were serious about it. They were even taking notes. In those Mead composition books. I began to wonder if there was gonna be a pop quiz.

"Well, I don't know about all women," replied Mistress Poison, "but I like foreplay for about two hours, and to be fucked for about five minutes."

"Five minutes?" asked a postal worker seated to my left, who was busy taking notes, but really slowly.

"Any longer than that and I get friction burns, and those suck," was her response, "and I hate to use lubrication."

I looked around the room at all the guys. There were no women. Except for the teacher. They all stared at the Germanic blonde with their jaws open to the ground.

"I like to give blow jobs," continued the teacher, "and I like a finger in my asshole".

My jaw dropped down like the rest of the class. Here was this teacher, who was not teaching us "How To Drive Your Woman Wild in Bed," but "How To Drive Mistress Poison Wild In Bed". I began to have fantasies of doing her, like the rest of the class. Only my fantasy involved stuffing a big red apple in her mouth to shut her up.

Mistress Poison then went on to explain that she had done a photo shoot with Ron Jeremy, a porno-star who looks like a gopher, and that his dick was actually not that big, even though he could suck it himself. What this had to do with anything, I'll never know.

"Would sucking your own dick be gay or masturbation?" I asked her, after having to raise my hand and be picked.

"Wha?" said the confused teacher.

"Would I be gay, or would I just be whacking off, if I were to suck my own?" I repeated.

"Ron Jermey fucked an 87-year-old woman in this movie, and they made the woman sign a consent form in case she died of a heart attack," was her reply.

"Wha?" I said.

She just stared at me and said nothing. I got it. I was being ignored.

"Why didn't they make that slob Jeremy sign one?" I asked.

Silence. Still on ignore. Like I get a lot on America Online.

Mistress Poison then explained to the class her life story. She was prompted to do this when some guy with wire-frame glasses, an ugly suit, and a Larry Fine haircut asked if she had a boyfriend.

The teacher explained to us that she had two kids, danced nude, did porno and dominatrix work, had lived with a woman a few years earlier who taught her how to *really* masturbate, and that her family had to flee Germany because her Grandfather was in the SS.

"Wow," I said. A guy with a beard who was sitting next to me looked at me funny, then continued to jot down notes.

Just then another mailman walked into the class. He was wearing his full outfit, with the little cap, nametag and everything. He looked at Ilsa, She-Wolf of The Learning Annex, confused.

"Just sit anywhere," barked the descendent of a Nazi, "and don't go postal on me."

I looked at her in shock. And amazement. This was almost worth the price I paid to get in.

Mistress Poison talked some more about her personal life, then finally talked about other women.

"Never use a dildo on a woman bigger than your own cock," she explained, "or your lady will get more pleasure from the rubber or plastic, and never want your penis again. Use something small, then when you stick your hard cock in her, she'll moan with delight."

About half the desks in the room began to rise slowly off the floor.

"And use anal beads—women love them," she continued, "they love to feel things up their asses."

The rest of the desks levitated.

Mistress Poison then babbled on about how her boyfriend loves anal beads, but isn't gay, and how to find a woman's G-spot, and a man's.

"Does anyone know where a woman's G-spot is?" she asked our Special Ed. class, and me, in my new 1970s *Starsky & Hutch-*

style yellow/brown leather pimp jacket I just purchased in Compton for under twenty bucks. Sporting my new goatee to match my bleached hair.

No one answered. So I finally did.

"Who cares?" I said.

She glared at me with that Nazi-bitch look, and I suddenly felt myself harder than I'd been in years.

"The G-spot," she explained, as she held up her hand, and curved her fingers, "is right inside the wall of the vagina. On the top. If you feel around, you can find it."

"What if you don't have a vagina?" I said quietly enough only for the guys around me to hear.

They didn't laugh.

They just continued panting. And taking notes.

"Does anyone know what the PC muscle is?" she asked.

No answers. None.

"It's the muscle each man has that allows him to have multiple orgasms," she explained.

"What does PC stand for?" I asked, seriously.

"I'm not sure," was her response.

"Personal Computing? Politically Correct?" I asked.

She again told me she wasn't sure, but maybe I was correct.

Doh.

Mistress Poison then went on to explain to us about our Personal Computing muscles, and how to locate and use them. She explained they were located in that little area behind the testicles, but before the anus. Kinda like the space between holes on a bowling ball.

"Now," she said to the class, as she slid her hand between her own legs, over her dress, "I want everyone to feel around down there and find the muscle. Don't be embarrassed. And if you get excited, that's fine. Hard cocks can turn me on."

I closed my eyes and wished I was home with my puppy. Or at the movies. Or playing on The PlayStation. Or even at The Dentist. Anywhere but here.

"You don't have to feel bad," I heard the teacher's voice say, as I closed my eyes tighter, "it's a natural thing. It's not that hard to find, and it feels so good."

I heard a few moans and almost vomited. I was convinced if my eyes were to open, they'd be pecked out by a gigantic albatross.

A few minutes after that, Mistress Poison announced that we'd have a 15-minute break. I used the time to sit in the bathroom down the hall and expel some 'rhea. Also, I listened as "students" went on and on about what a great teacher she was.

The class re-started with Mistress Poison popping a store-purchased porno tape into a VCR and pushing play. We all watched a television screen as a man went down on a woman. Mistress Poison pointed to the woman's clit, and the man's tongue, and informed us that she liked it "just like that."

When the woman began to blow the man, she told us that it was easier for men to blow men, because they didn't have the same gag reflexes women did.

When the couple started to fuck, she told us she liked it like that too, but with a finger up her ass.

I looked hesitantly around the class, and watched all the guys as they stared at the television screen. Some of the men had their hands on their groins. Some were even moving them.

It was then, as everyone's attention was distracted, that I made my getaway. I grabbed my new 1970s *Starsky & Hutch*-style yellow/brown leather pimp jacket I just purchased in Compton for under twenty bucks, and goose-stepped the hell out of there. Fast. I don't think anyone saw me leave. They were all too busy.

I vowed not to attend the next Learning Annex class.

*

But I did. It was about two weeks later, and it featured Jerry Springer, and was called "How To Break into Show Business." It featured the moron on the television that my friend Monica Mishap is in love with. For some reason, she thinks he is the sexiest man alive. So I took her with me. To see him. Listen to him. And meet him. She took with her a copy of her favorite German porn, *Anal Spiel*, to give to Jerry. She thought he might like it as a gift. Turns out she was probably right.

We arrived at the Warwick Hotel late. About 15 minutes late. I still had the 'rhea, and I had gotten lost above 14th Street again.

As we entered the second floor of the hotel, we saw a bunch of people in suits in a large room. So we walked in there, figuring we'd see Jerry.

"I'm sorry," said some real snooty woman with her nose in the air, to Monica, with her bright orange hair and Baby Spice shoes, and to me, in my new 1970s *Starsky & Hutch*-style yellow/brown leather pimp jacket I just purchased in Compton for under twenty bucks, "this is a private affair."

"Where's Jerry?" I asked.

She looked at us, confused. Then pointed to a table across the lobby that had a sign reading "Learning Annex."

Doh.

We signed up, and then went into a room filled to capacity to see and hear Jerry Springer.

"Mayor Giuliani can be loony," Jerry was explaining to the crowd as Monica and I found our seats. There were lots of TV cameras around, as well as a zillion journalists and "media" people. They were in nice suits and coats, with tags around their necks that looked like backstage passes.

As we settled in, and Monica started to get wet for Jerry, we listened to him talk about how his show never intended to have fights, but it just ended up that way.

Lots of media people asked lots of questions, and the whole thing looked more like a press conference than a Learning Annex class. Which was OK by me. These people didn't smell, or touch themselves in front of me. Yet.

"Jerry, remember me?" asked some girl, after Jerry picked her when she raised her hand, "I used to work at the desk at the library in college. We used to talk!"

"Oh yeah," said Jerry, totally not remembering a damn thing, "how have you been?"

A few more people raised their hands, and Jerry talked to them. Most said they knew Jerry "in the day", and were happy about his success. I looked at Monica, as she just sat there, glued to her seat.

Jerry then went on to talk about how his show doesn't exploit people, like the network news, and how he is really just the ringleader of a circus. But a nice circus.

Everyone applauded at the right time, and chanted "Jerry, Jerry, Jerry!" I felt like I was in the audience at his show.

More questions were shot at Jerry. Some actually relating to the topic of the class. How to Break into Show Business. Jerry told everyone that it was difficult, if not impossible, that he was very lucky, and that he didn't need anymore interns or guests right this second, thank you.

Finally I raised my hand with a question. I'd thought of a good one. Jerry had been talking about the fights on his show, and about his high ratings. I wanted to ask him what was next.

"What are you gonna ask him?" said Monica, very concerned for Jerry's well-being.

"Something," I said, raising my hand and being ignored by the television host all dressed in black.

"Come on, George," she said, "what are you gonna say? Don't say anything bad, like you usually do. I *like* Jerry!"

I assured Monica that the question was legit, and told her to move around in the seat every once in a while, or she might get stuck to it.

"Shut up," was her reply, in that "I'm 18 and I know it all" voice.

I did, but kept my hand in the air.

"How will I stay looking so young?" said Jerry to the crowd, "Well, I was thinking of a face lift, but maybe I'll just get my body lowered!"

Chants of "Jerry, Jerry, Jerry!" followed.

"It really is great to be back here in New York," Jerry said.

I almost barfed, but kept my hand raised. Finally, after Jerry took just about everyone's question's, he pointed to me, and said, "Yes?"

"Um," I said in my new 1970s *Starsky & Hutch*-style yellow/brown leather pimp jacket I just purchased in Compton for under twenty bucks. With my blonde goatee, and hair on my head to match.
"Why don't you just publicly execute people on your show? For the ratings!"

Jerry looked at me, stunned. As did Monica, the media, and everyone who knew Jerry back in the day.

I thought about what I had said, and actually considered it to be a good idea. I mean, the fights on Springer were boring, and fake looking, and his ratings would eventually go down. Seeing people put to death would be, well, fun.

I could imagine Jerry broadcasting from Florida, where they'd tie up some poor chump to Ol' Sparky and let that electric chair rip. The guy's eyes would pop out of his head, and smoke would come out of his ears before his head would burst into flames.

Or he'd broadcast from a state that had The Gas Chamber. Watching a guy puke all over himself wouldn't just be for frat parties anymore.

Maybe even Jerry could go to Mexico and broadcast a firing squad doing its thing. Wow. As long as he didn't go to Texas. Lethal injection is boring.

Jerry could have great ratings, and we in this country could have great television. Besides, it would be hard to fake deaths—harder, at least, than fights.

"To answer your question," said Jerry, shocking me out of my thoughts and Monica's distressed look, "On Thursday we'll start!"

"Jerry, Jerry, Jerry!" the audience chanted.

"Actually," he explained, "I'm not sure of my view on televised executions. I'm against the death penalty, but maybe people should see it."

"It would give you great ratings," I replied.

Jerry just smiled.

Then took someone else's question.

The session ended quickly after that, because Jerry had to get to Letterman, where he was due to make an appearance. Earlier, he had done a press conference at The Hard Rock. He signed some autographs, and Monica got to meet him and his security guard, an off-duty cop. Monica gave him *Anal Spiel* to give to Jerry. The cop said that he would make sure he got it.

As we left, following Springer, and goons yelling "Jerry, Jerry, Jerry!" and more media than the Pope gets, I asked Monica if she learned anything from this Learning Annex class.

"No," she said, "and they didn't even have a final thought."

*

About two weeks later, it was time for the John Berendt "How to Write a Bestseller" course. Instead of putting on my new 1970s *Starsky & Hutch* style yellow/brown leather pimp jacket I just purchased in Compton for under twenty bucks, I stayed home with PJ. My puppy. And played video games.

If I'd been smart, I could have just taken renowned psychic Sylvia Browne's course first, and had a premonition that The Learning Annex sucks. But then, maybe PJ was trying to tell me that when he let me wipe up his shit with their magazine.

Take My Life, Please.

Endnotes:

www.myspace.com/helpgeorgetabb

Seeing that it's the holiday season and all, I thought I'd recommend some video games n' stuff. There are lots of goods ones out now, and coming out now, but here are some of the best: Bioshock from Midway for the Xbox 360 is punk rock. It's original, creepy, and really fun. It is like nothing you ever played before as it's a first person shoot-em-up with lots of wicked powers. Like torching people, freezing them, and throwing big shit at them. It rocks. Medal of Honor: Airborne is also a good FPS. First Person Shooter. The graphics rule, as do most games from EA, but the only problem here is you have to upgrade your guns during WWII. WTF? Then there's John Woo's Strangehold. If you have seen any of his movies, it's the exact same thing. That could be good or bad, depending on your tastes. For me, it's fun for a while, but then I feel like changing the channel. That Chow Yung Fat guy gets boring. For mobile gaming, check out Harry Potter and the new Simpsons game from EA for cell phones. It's fun, and beats reading when you are on a train or waiting for a doctor or something. Reading is for morons. Anyway, these games look really good for cell phones, I mean *really good*. Whoa! And they are fun as well. Harry Potter is also out for the Mac, if you can believe it. As are some other games like Battlefield 2142. I didn't know computer games could be so fun and addictive. Uh-oh. Also, EA has a bunch of great sports games out now if you are into that kinda stuff. Top of the line, actually. It's just the truth.

In DVDs as gifts, check out the new release of *The Graduate*. I never saw this movie until now. It's punk rock before punk rock. I mean, whoa! Dustin Hoffman may be the first punk rocker, even before Iggy! Then there's *The Fly Collection* with Vincent Price as the fly. Scary stuff! "Help me!" Arrrgh! Also there is a Rodger Corman collection with some great stuff like *Man with the Xray Eyes* and *Bloody Mama*! There is no *Death Race 2000* or *Rock 'n' Roll High School*, but you own those already, don't you? Also got *From Beyond* with Jeffrey Combs from *Reanimator* and *Return of the Living Dead*. A *real punk rock* zombie movie. Really! Probably the first and last, and it's so fucking funny, it's sick. It's a must see!

As far as music, when are The Dwarves gonna put out another record?

Happy Holidaze!

Lately I have been getting in touch with some old pen pals and zine folks I have known since the early '90s, some of them. Whether its Steve from *Ripping Thrash*, Chris from *Agitate*, Ivailo from Aon Productions, Darwin from many projects in the P.I., Takeshi from CFDL, many friends from Malaysia, Filip from SEE YOU IN HELL/Czech Republic, and many more. There is something about knowing these

folks, even if just through letter writing, and knowing that they are still here and dedicated. We have all had various things go on in our lives, distractions, changes, times of less activity, but we keep coming back and that is really meaningful and inspiring to me. Thanks guys!

Among those cool folks I recently heard from an old worldwide hardcore amigo Craig who does the awesome zine *Upheaval*. And it's back! Several years ago *Upheaval* and *Mangelslakt* were pretty much two peas in a pod in terms of US-based zines covering international HC. Like us, Craig has struggled to keep the zine alive, and has a loyal audience cheering him on. When we first saw Craig's zine we were blown away by his coverage of scenes we hadn't found out about, bands we had never heard of, and his true dedication to worldwide punk rock. The re-emergence of *Upheaval* and re-established contact with other old worldwide hardcore friends has spurned us to get serious about putting out *Mangelslakt* again, so we have begun work in earnest towards that end. More on that later.

Upheaval #11 and 12 have come out in the last couple months and they are brief, two page affairs chock full of information, mixing US and International HC. It still has the look of the old half sized *Upheaval* of yore. Of course I could complain and say I want it to be longer (which I do), but I am just glad he is back. Stamp in the US, $1 overseas, or trade! Do it! *Upheaval* Zine: PO Box 301426 Jamaica Plain, MA 02130

There have, of course, been some awesome records coming out lately. A lot of shitty ones too, but that's another story. MUERTE EN LA INDUSTRIA's CD compilation on Producciones Ennegro is really cool. One of my favorite early Mexican punk bands alongside MASSACRE 68 and ATOXXXICO, it's good to see these guys finally get a proper discography. There have been tapes floating around for a few years of varying quality but this does them justice. This includes tracks from their demo in '87 and a 1990 live show.

On the topic of awesome labels, I have recently discovered Legion Of Death Records from France, who is very close to being an underground metal version of Tian An Men 89 records! They release bands from all over the place and do a good job of it. Although he generally releases stuff in pretty limited numbers (sometimes 300-500 copies), I have had pretty good luck finding most of them. The TAARMA 7" is total raging black metal from where? Afghanistan. Yeah, seriously. And it is damn good too! RABBOTH AMMON has a 7" on Legion Of Death and it is awesome mystical black metal with a focus on the myths of their homeland, Jordan and the Ammonites who were some tough cookies. The *Southern Storm of Evil* Comp LP has a bunch of those dirty, raw, vicious South American thrash and black metal bands that I personally am the hugest sucker ever for. The most recent release is a 7" by NORTHERN ALLIANCE from Pakistan called *Death Anthems For a World Of Shit*. Nice title for sure. The cover looks crusty as all get out, but this is some dirty, raw black metal with some punk influences. I don't know much about this band, but it's fucking cool to see this being released.

Also on the Asian front, there are 7"s by WEAPON (Bangladesh)—who is awesome blasphemous thrash/black metal that has since relocated to Canada—Malaysian thrash band MANTAK, and RITUAL DAY from China. I have some other stuff by RITUAL DAY, a CD I think, and I have been pretty impressed by their style that combines black and death metal, which I usually don't care for but they do it well. There have been a growing number of Chinese metal bands showing up in metal circles these days, which to me is a pretty strong indication that the punk scene there will probably start to really boom in the next few years. That seems to be how it goes. Thailand, for example, about seven or eight years ago had a very small punk scene, but has recently emerged to have a pretty healthy and sizable scene, which is really cool. The metal scene was bigger and I think the punk scene developed based on the forum established for metal. That seems to be how scenes grow in many places. Thailand seems to be a pretty good stop for many bands touring Southeast Asia now. It is cool to see people working together in underground music circles to build up things. But I digress. Legion Of Death is an awesome label. Support them! www.legionofdeath.cjb.net

On the topic of international touring, I recently heard from Shaun from Australia. Shaun runs www.tenzenmen.com a site dedicated to providing information for bands who want to tour the pacific area, including not just Australia and Japan, but Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, and even Vietnam and China. Shaun started this as a service after trying to organize tours in the area and feeling there was a need to place this information at people's disposal. Folks I have known that have toured the Asia/pacific route have had to rely on hearsay and many go-betweens to determine where they can play, how, etc. Of course, punks in Southeast Asia tend to be some of the most enthusiastic, helpful folks I have ever known, so with some effort, people tend to be able to find places to play on a tour. The info Shaun is giving lays it all out, hassle free, so bands can more easily assemble a tour! Several bands have already toured the circuit based on his information! Bands especially should check this out!!

So yeah, I am serious about *Mangelslakt* coming back. We have had fits and starts of trying to put out a new issue over the last five (?) years, shit always got in the way, life, living in different places, work, etc. Emily and I have been amazed and flattered by people remembering us and demanding new stuff. It's quite incredible for a zine that only released three issues, and even then whose last issue was five years ago, to be remembered at all. Even more unbelievable that people have so often said *Mangelslakt* is/was their favorite zine. That has been so heartening (and mind-blowing!), we can't even express it. It's not common people are supported in this way in any aspect of life! So yeah, we are returning and have gathered some of our old hordes, supporters, conspirators, etc. to put out #4. *Mangelslakt* always was a big zine, bookish really, and that will probably be the case with this too. Just so people know, we won't be wishy-washy about the future of *Mangelslakt* anymore—we are here. Thanks to everyone for their support and kind words, it has been really a shot in the arm.

Shameless self promotion time: the SLEEPING AT THE POPES 7" on my label, Starving Times Records, has been selling well and I have been making lots of trades with kind folks from all over the place. It's limited to 500, and I still have some left. They were a political thrash/HC band from Cape Town, South Africa. Out by the time this issue sees print will be the TOXIC DEATH KOMMANDO MILITIA (formerly SKUM), 7". These lads are also from Cape Town, and play raging mid '90s style crust grind a la NAUSEA, DISRUPT, DOOM, etc. Awesome stuff! This is also limited to 500. Both releases are $4 ppd each, from me. I released these with my bru Abri who is a South African living in the US and does BroederKont Records. We will probably be doing some more South African stuff in the future but also have some dual label projects in the dockets for a split Slovenian HC CD, some cassette releases, and perhaps some other shit. We are looking for bands

to release, who may find a home on one or both of our labels, so bands send in your stuff to me. Don't be shy—*send demos*! Till next time!

Nick Daniels PO Box 18884 Oakland, CA 94619 U$A

REFUTING DEREK AND OTHER RANDOM OBSERVATIONS

Dearest Derek Bryan:

Hi Derek… I saw you took a few shots at me in your letter in *MRR #293*. I need to refute some of your inaccuracies. First of all, I don't live in Dearborn, Michigan. I live in Massachusetts—you know, the People's Republic of Massachusetts, where (shock!) them pre-verted homos can get married. I wouldn't want to live in Dearborn since there's a large Arab-American population—and aren't all of 'em terrorists? It's bad enough a lot of 'em are Republicans, for chrissakes.

Second, I have never been a hippie. Hell, one of my favorite songs is "Kill The Hippies" by the Deadbeats. An early Dangerhouse release that has a brilliantly obnoxious guitar solo in the middle and vocals from Geza X, later known for his solo and production work. I don't eat granola. I don't wear sandals or Birkenstocks. I *loathe* almost all of the music associated with the hippie crowd. I haven't even owned a tie-dye shirt since the mid '80s, when I had a Hüsker Dü tie-dye but traded it to Mat from Civil Dissident in Australia and got some pretty rad records in return.

I remember Bob and Grant from the Hüskers used to wear shirts that could be considered kind of psychedelic/hippie-ish. I recall Bob telling me they got them from a cheapie clothing place called Ragstock. That *does* sound as if it was derived from Woodstock, and they *did* cover hippie/folky Donovan's "Sunshine Superman," but believe me, in their heyday, those guys did *not* play like hippies. Sure, they were melodic, and went way downhill by the time *Candy Apple Grey* came out but, from '83 to '85, they were one of the most kick-ass, best live bands out there.

Incidentally, anyone who thinks *Warehouse* is the better double album from the band needs to have his/her fucking head examined. Of course, that opinion came from a message board populated by plenty of musical lameoids. I've seen threads that praise Simon and Garfunkel and Fleetwood Mac, for fuck's sake. I commented that punk rock happened *because* of bands like Fleetwood Mac. That's the Stevie Nicks/Lindsey Buckingham version I'm talking about. The band's earlier incarnation actually did make a contribution to both punk and metal, when guitarist Jeremy Spencer was in the band—this was before he flipped out, gave up his worldly possessions, and joined the Children of God cult. Judas Priest did a cover of the Mac's "Green Manalishi (With The Two Pronged Crown)," which was also covered by COC on their first album *Eye For An Eye*. Spencer was also responsible for "Somebody's Gonna Get Their Head Kicked In Tonight," later popularized by the Rezillos. That was the b-side of a single and done under the name Earl Vince and the Valiants. According to the band's website, Spencer *"also contributed much vulgarity to live performances, hanging condoms from his guitar and using foul language. The group was even banned from London's Marquee Club after Fleetwood and Spencer appeared onstage with a variety of sexual aids, including condoms filled with beer. Jeremy's ability to mimic Rock 'n' Roll greats soon led the band to devote half of their show to doing hilarious '50s pop parodies, with Spencer impersonating Elvis, Little Richard, Buddy Holly and Cliff Richard. For these performances, the band would call themselves 'Earl Vince and the Valiants,' and Jeremy would slick back his curly hair and put on a gold lamé suit."* That sounds pretty punk to me.)

Back to Hüsker Dü, though. Listen to side two of *Zen Arcade*. That's some of the most visceral hardcore the band ever created—"Beyond The Threshold," "Pride," "I'll Never Forget You," "What's Going On" and "Masochism World"—before chilling out with the skippable, ballad-esque "Standing By The Sea." *Everything Falls Apart* had similar moments of scorch and that's to say nothing of their first LP, *Land Speed Record*, recorded live, although I'm not as enamored with that album. On the tie-dye issue, why I ever purchased such a garment befuddles me. I suppose I could attribute it to the folly of youth, although I wasn't too youthful at that point (24 or so). Maybe my lousy bank job had my brain so addled that all common sense was lost.

I plead guilty to living in the suburbs, although it took my wife and me about 15 years to finally be able to afford to buy a house. As for being a fat fuck, well that would have been true a few years ago but, since then, I've shed 35 lbs. so that's not really accurate anymore. Although I do need to do some more sit-ups since my gut is still a bit bigger than I'd like it to be. Not on an El Duce level, though. (El Duce was the drummer/vocalist for the Mentors, for those not in the know.)

Moving on: Slayer and Fear have both long been a part of my musical diet. Well, Slayer much more than Fear. I've seen both bands live—probably seen Slayer at least half a dozen times at this point. It may surprise some of you to know that *Reign In Blood* is in my all time top-ten albums…hell, it's in my top five. As I type this, the sweet strains of "Angel of Death" are emanating from my stereo. One time, Brett Mathews of *Hit List* and *AMP* magazines and I horrified my wife Ellen and my friend Anna with an a cappella version of "Raining Blood." I should mention that this happened while we were sitting smack in the middle of a café in downtown Berkeley. By a cappella, I mean that I began tapping out the ominous drumbeat that starts the song on the table and then we each verbalized Kerry King and Jeff Hanneman's guitar parts. Ellen's never let me forget about that—and I'm not ashamed of it, either.

Yes, I *know* Slayer is on a major label and that probably destroys my DIY punk cred right there, but so be it. We all have skeletons that hide in our closets. I sometimes talk to mine; they keep me company. Why the hell did I just quote a 1989 Haywire song ("Bring The Power Down")? Did you know that their singer Billy Rubin was also in Halfoff? And whatever *did* happen to Billy? He seems to have fallen off the face of the earth. If anyone knows where he is, please get in touch. Ah yes, Al Quint, the master of the non sequitur, strikes again. This whole column is one big non sequitur, a stream of consciousness that may not even be going anywhere, but gives me the opportunity to share various musical tidbits and anecdotes. Besides, given the heavy nature of recent columns, I figured I'd offer a slightly more whimsical tract. I could write about how Bush's veto of a bill to provide expanded health care to children once again proves that he's a heartless motherfucker, but I can't do that in every column.

Slayer has songs that offer a vivid portrayal of warfare—"Mandatory Suicide" from *South of Heaven*, "War Ensemble" off *Seasons In The Abyss* and, from their last long player "Christ Illusion," and "Eyes Of The Insane," which deals with a soldier's post-traumatic stress disorder. Perhaps

they're just offering a reporter's viewpoint without any editorial content intended, at least in the songs. That was also offered as an explanation for "Angel of Death," about Josef Mengele, the Nazi war criminal, and "Jihad," about 9/11 from a terrorist's perspective. It's not an endorsement. Slayer once described "Angel" as a song about a man "who got away with murder," but also opined that people don't need to have it spelled out that didn't support his actions. But I found a video where they visit the troops in Germany, and Hanneman and King look as though they're about to cum when holding machine guns and Tom Araya looks happy as a clam in shit behind the controls of a fighter jet. Some of the soldiers also look gleeful showing off their instruments of destruction. Maybe I should leave well enough alone here. I don't even need to go into Hanneman's collection of Nazi memorabilia.

Fear's recordings are kind of thin, but their "Fuck Christmas" is a holiday perennial and their crowd-baiting performance in *The Decline Of Western Civilization* is classic as well. I don't know whether the non-PC stuff is meant as shtick or the real thing. However, I think I once heard that Fear played an AIDS benefit many years ago. If anyone knows whether that's true or not, let me know.

I almost sound as though I'm trying to justify my affection for these bands. I have to say, though, that when I listen to left-wing subversive talk radio, the shows will often go to and come out of break with the most wretched, strident folky/rootsy garbage or flat-out bad rock music. I mean, I concur with some of the ideas in the lyrics, but man, what an execrable way to express it. If you're going to sing a song about peace, give me Megadeth's "Peace Sells" any day.

I don't really agree with Dave Mustaine of Megadeth's politics, which have taken a sharp turn to the right in recent years. In a 2004 interview in *Pit* magazine, Dave said the following: *"The United States is the strongest country in the world for a reason. Now I'm gonna vote for Bush. I voted for Clinton, but I don't give a fuck because I vote for the lesser of two evils. Kerry is a mistake. He will ruin our country."* When Megadeth played in Israel, Mustaine was interviewed by Ben Bresky from Israel National Radio. He said this about compulsory military service in Israel and his thoughts about it, in general: *"I'm a very proud American, I love my country, and I believe that our nation in America could learn a lesson from your country here with mandatory military service. I think it instills character into the youth and although a lot of young people here probably don't really like having to serve, I think that the integrity and the character of the Israeli people is much more consistent then a lot of other countries because of that mandatory military service."*

The guy has the right to his opinion, but while Mustaine mentioned in an interview with *Metal Edge* that he registered for the draft and was never called up, he never volunteered, either. I suppose I could be unkind and say he's the typical "chicken hawk," willing to let other people go off to die but not putting his own body on the line. Hmm… I just *was* that unkind. I'd still rather hear "Peace Sells" than someone with an acoustic guitar warbling about Bush's transgressions.

One more Mustaine anecdote. In that same *Pit* interview, he went off on Natalie Maines of the Dixie Chicks for expressing anti-Bush statements when they played in England and he also made unkind references to her weight. He said, *"unless you are a politician, shut up. What do they know about politics?"* He also referred to Maines as a *"stupid twat."* If you remember, the Chicks created a firestorm of controversy and there were boycotts of their music, including banishment from many country radio stations. The Chicks got their revenge, though, when their next album went straight to number one, selling over half a million copies the first week. I don't like really like their music, but good for them.

A few days ago I was listening to Marvin Gaye's "What's Going On," his 1971 smash that had anti-war lyrics. Here are a few: *"We don't need to escalate/You see, war is not the answer/For only love can conquer hate/You know we've got to find a way/To bring some lovin' here today/Picket lines and picket signs/Don't punish me with brutality/Talk to me, so you can see/Oh, what's going on…"* I almost wonder if that song would have created similar controversy from some quarters if it came out now. Maybe it did back then. Maybe Gaye got on Nixon's enemies list. In any case, *"we don't need to escalate"* could be a rejoinder to Bush's recent "surge" in Iraq. A song and events separated by 36 years and still relevant, sadly enough. A few days ago, that song came up on my MP3 player when I had it in shuffle and, I swear to god, Slayer's "Raining Blood" was the next song. Very odd. And 100 percent true.

Moving on. Yes, Derek, I've heard of Daniel Pearl. He was murdered in Pakistan by Al Qaeda operative Khalid Sheikh Mohammed. In case you forgot, Al Qaeda had no connection to Iraq, the country that the US invaded without provocation. I've also heard of US atrocities in Iraq, like when 24 civilians were murdered in cold blood by Marines in Haditha. That was in retribution for a Marine being killed by a roadside bomb. I've heard about prisoners being held without charge and tortured in such places as Abu-Ghraib and Guantanamo. I've heard about over 3000 US military personnel losing their lives because of this illegal, immoral military action. None of it is right, Derek.

And, no, Derek, I don't want terrorists moving in next door. It's bad enough that the neighborhood has recently been invaded by some annoying, shrieking kids. I don't think the terrorists could afford the price, anyway. Housing prices around here are insanely high. Well, if they're Saudi Arabian, that may not be the case. You know—the country where most of the Al Qaeda terrorists came from. So why didn't we invade them? Could it have to do with the fact that the Bushes and the Saudi royal family have a long-time relationship? Could it have to do with oil from that country? Hmm… I think we may be onto something here.

We can agree on one thing, Derek—Bad Posture were one hell of a fucking band.

MUSIC REVIEWS

AMERICAN CHEESEBURGER – s/t (Tsunami, 7" EP)

The band with the somewhat silly name but lethal sound makes a really big splash their second EP. Wanton rampage favoring a charging thrash style and vocals that sound like razors in the night, uh, throat. The lead guitar on "Camouflage Hairspray" is god-awful, so are the horns on the pisstake uncredited track that ends it, but they're also kind of cool elements. They definitely have a creative way with song titles, such as "If Your Face Was Georgia, My Fist Would Be Home By Now," which is a well-aimed attack on some of the retrograde residents of their home state. There's a decided 9 Shocks Terror influence here and that's nothing to sneer at. They put on one hell of a live show, too. The band's unhinged nature comes across well on these recordings. (Band contact: 385 S. Peter St., Athens, GA 30601, shabbah36@hotmail.com)

86 MENTALITY – Final Exit (Deranged, 7" EP)

This is probably it for one of the meanest-sounding bands in hardcore. Six new burners and it begins with the slow build-

up of their "Outro" (which is an intro, to be specific) and then the musical brass knuckles come out. Raw, bruising hardcore punk with catchy properties and having a street punk/oi feel, as well. Boots stomping around the dance floor, a tough vibe, but not in the spin-kick/martial arts manner. In the liner notes for the Negative Approach *Total Recall* comp, Tesco Vee referred to "fuckin '81 baby—jack booties wit bandannas, shaved noggins..." That's the vibe I get with 86 Mentality—that and DC '81. The thrashing is done at a more moderate pace than those bands and it's not a straight derivative but an overall feel. Also, only their vocalist Steve sports that look, but work with me here. If this doesn't get you pounding at the wall, I don't know what will. (2700 Lower Rd., Roberts Creek, BC V0N 2W4, CANADA, www.derangedrecords.com)

APESHIT/CIVIL CRISIS – Split (Welfare, 7" EP)

Vinyl debut for two Boston-area bands. Apeshit, fronted by Boston's most enthusiastic punk rock dancer Circle Pat, favors double-speed thrash *ala* Siege on some of these songs, and it occasionally sputters. The recording sounds a bit muffled, too. Interesting lyrics for "Gender-Cide," which takes issue with the negative viewpoint that some women have towards all men; that they're "brutish pigs," to paraphrase Pat's words. A friend has told me that I need to understand why some women do have that attitude and (to simplify it more than I should) I see the point, but that doesn't mean it's not bothersome to me and these words reflect that as well. Has its moments but there's room for improvement. Civil Crisis has a raw, ranty hardcore punk approach. The high-pitched vocals (from one of 'em) and speedy thrash bring 9 Shocks (again) to mind, albeit without the rock 'n' roll impulse. An effective pissed-off sound from these young men. (58 River St., Haverhill, MA 01832, www.welfarerecords.net)

BANDANOS – We Crush Your Mind With The Thrash Inside (625, CD)
DESTRUCTION'S END/BANDANOS – Thrash From The Dead (625, CD)

Thrash? Don't mind if I do. Where have I heard that before?* I've certainly heard bands like Bandanos and Destruction's End before. Bandanos are from Brazil and have the retro crossover sound down pat. A rough 'n' tumble Bay Area thrash influence, stripped down and throwing in a touch of early COC. The strangled vocals have some Mike Dean in 'em, tag-teamed with Blaine Accused. Another throwback is the photo collage in the centerfold for "We Crush Your Mind." Oddly, the songs on the split, which was released before the full-length, have fuller-sounding production and it creates more impact. Either way, it's throat-grabbing fodder. As for Destruction's End, it's a good fit with Bandanos. Another band blurring metal and hardcore with a straightforward speed attack. Hell, they make the '80s tribute more complete by including a sample from the Rambo *First Blood* movie and that's the title of the lead-off song, as well. This band has gotten quite a bit better since their '04 album on Mike Fitzgerald Records. It's tighter, and has better drumming and recording quality. *Viva la crossover!* (*The answer is Municipal Waste, in case you didn't know) (www.625thrash.com)

DEATH SENTENCE – Until The End Of The Sentence (Burrito, CD)

This is the Aussie Death Sentence, and the recordings date from the mid to late '80s. A complete anthology and including a number of unissued/rare recordings. This band traded in ultra-fast hardcore, sometimes coming across as disjointed, but never flagging in energy. Death Sentence did show some evolution, even as the band had a number of personnel changes and endured the death of one of their drummers. Reading the liner notes, written by their manager Maureen, it's obvious this was one badass band, especially their vocalist Peter McGrath. He's lived a self-abusive punk rock life and has apparently paid the price for it. There are some punkier sounding songs in later batches—"My Love" and "Bitchin'," for instance. The sound quality is spotty at times, especially the unreleased '85 recording and rehearsal tape from '86, both of which sound like a later-generation tape copy. We're talking about hardcore, though—pristine sound quality isn't mandatory, and there aren't problems elsewhere. This was one raw-sounding band. These guys were doing something similar to what Heresy was doing in the UK. Looking towards the States and adding a more extreme speed element. An intense whirlwind of cacophony. (PO Box 3204, Brandon, FL 33509-3204, www.soundideadistribution.com)

DEGENERICS – Generic Record Collection (Soulrebel, CD)

Just what it says, collecting this Jersey band's vinyl releases, comp songs, a few unreleased songs, a demo track and live stuff. A strong, often dramatic sound that blended hardcore ferocity, including some Die Kreuzen-ish touches, metal ("Rising Sun Experience," for instance), reggae and ska. The latter adds to a song such as "What'll You Do." The main emphasis, though, is burn and sting. Craig's vocals were ranty but also exuding an impassioned purposefulness. There's a clear evolution from their 7"s to the album although, even in their embryonic days, the full-tilt hardcore was already incorporating diverse influences. An occasional misfire, such as the straight reggae (only a few songs) but far overshadowed by the power of the vast majority of songs here. And some good news—they've started playing again. (http://www.myspace.com/thedegenerics)

DOA – Smash The State: The Raw Original DOA 1978-81 (MVD, DVD)

Oh hell yeah—a collection of DOA performances during their early years, when they were at their best. I never got to see the lineup that included Randy Rampage and Chuck Biscuits and, along with Joey Shithead and Dave Gregg (for most of the songs), they were absolutely smokin'. Their stage presence and slam-bang, catchy punk ranks among the best that time period offered and these clips perfectly bridge the original punk era and birth of hardcore. Biscuits, in particular, is incredible to watch. He was 15 when he joined the band in '78, according to Joey's book *I, Shithead,* and is a powerhouse of brawn and finesse. Goddamn. I wish I could have seen this lineup, but I never did—I even had a chance in '81. I had just picked up their *Something Better Change* and *Hardcore '81* albums and was stoked to see they'd be playing at the Paradise in Boston. That show got canceled because of low ticket sales, and unknown to me, it got moved to a smaller club down the street.

Getting back to the DVD, the live stuff consists of single camera shots, varying in quality but watchable. The best performance, I think, is from the On Broadway in SF, where they were opening for another band (DK's?) and the opening song "New Age" sounds the clarion call. There's also a TV studio performance of "The Enemy" that has Simon "Stubby Pecker" Wilde on bass, doing his best to mimic Rampage's bounce-around exploits, though not quite nailing it. The earliest stuff is from a show they played at the Anarchist Anti-Canada Day in July of '78. Joey is interviewed and doesn't exactly articulate himself well, although he does act punk as fuck by shov-

ing a cigarette up his nose. The audience looks silly and the "norms" and cops are amused. They almost didn't get to play but the authorities relented. Even at that point, DOA was fairly solid although they'd improve dramatically in the next few years. Finally, there's a conceptual video of "World War 3" with that lots-of-white background, live-in-the-studio feel and a TV report about the punk scene in Vancouver. No extras and this isn't a documentary, it's just them playing live. Fine with me. Any video that gives you the "wish I was there" feeling doesn't need anything else. (PO Box 280, Oaks, PA 19456, www.mvdvisual.com)

GUILTY FACES – demo (CD-R)

Two guys from Rat Byte are in this band and they're off to a fine start with this demo. Rockin' mid-tempo punk and a few hardcore songs. Tommy spits out the vocals with a snotty cadence and the songs are punchy and drip with a bad attitude. Hatin' life, hatin' the burbs, longing to get the fuck out. If I lived in Connecticut, I'd want to get out too! Sorry—I won't disparage my wife's home state anymore. Bands such as Guilty Faces justify its continued existence. (3 Clearview Ave., Bethel, CT 06801, tommyh-perkins@aim.com)

LOST CAUSE – Kill What's Inside (Love The Music Hate The Scene, 12" EP)

There have been many bands called Lost Cause over the years, and I almost think their label name, Love The Music Hate The Scene would be a cooler band moniker. This band is from Philly and includes Ned, who has logged time as the vocalist for Balance of Terror, Sangre De Los Puercos and Endless Nightmare, and could be one of the tallest frontmen in punk. Other bands on the resume for the various members include AOS, Violation and Witch Hunt. That should give you a fairly good indication that this is loud, aggressive music. There's definitely a Scandinavian bent in the band's approach, but also some Poison Idea inspiration, the latter coming from the guitar sound and delivery. Ned's hoarse voice effectively conveys the words of rage. "Through The Cracks," about people lacking health insurance, is timely in light of the fact that Bush has vetoed an expansion of health care coverage for children. It's always a good sign when the record ends and you crave more. I've played it through two times while writing this review. (Mitchell Brochu, PO Box 37271, Philadelphia, PA 19148, miskatonica@hotmail.com)

THE PMRC – Polyphonics For The Modern Renaissance Cannibal (Motorchest, 7" EP)

Fiercely rockin' hardcore punk. There's a speed metal vibe on these songs without the lead guitar—it's just a throttling tempo, such as on "My Annihilation" and that song pillages like a motherfucker. That's the effect most of the time, in fact. Guitarist/vocalist Mike Grayum has a throaty, soulful cadence similar to Serge from the Goons (if you've ever heard of that band). Lyrically, there are takes on personal trials and tribulations and larger issues and they're both direct and abstract. The bottom line is agitation both in words and music. (PO Box 725, Poplar Bluff, MO 63901, www.myspace.com/thepmrcband)

SANCTUM / STORMCROW – Split (No Options, LP)

Two brutal-sounding bands—Sanctum, from Seattle, and Bay Area-ites Stormcrow. Both bands trade in metallic crust and each vocalist exercises (exorcises?) their inner demon—guttural and necessitating the lyric sheet, which ain't that easy to read either. They're printed on the inside of the colorful gatefold sleeve that pictures some kind of medieval battle and maybe that's the concept here. It's obviously not cheerful material—it's doom and bombast to accompany the heavy sounds. Sanctum has a speedier, rampaging attack, and makes the stronger impression. Their songs have a more-than-effective ravenousness. Stormcrow largely stakes out lumbering terrain, an aural decay that gets bogged down under the weight, especially after Sanctum's obliterative approach. Out of their three songs on this split, "Beneath The Earth," is the one that shows the greatest signs of life, pummeling ahead in authoritative style, making me wish the other songs were in that vein. (PO Box 22285, Oakland, CA 94623, www.nooptionsrecords.com)

STREET TRASH – Into The Wasteland (No Class, LP)

This was recorded a while ago and was apparently supposed to come out on My War Records. It doesn't matter, really. All that matters is this is one scorcher of an LP—well, if 15 or so minutes is considered an LP. The *modus punkerandi* (sorry) remains the same—phlegmy vocals and a no-bullshit tandem of punk and hardcore. The bass-playing is particularly sick-sounding—towards the end of "Five Dirty Fingers," there are some dirty-ass Lemmy-isms. Hell, it's all cool—a reckless, relentless rush of power and adrenalin. And the yellow/red-splattered vinyl makes a bold artistic statement as well. (PO Box 40158, Long Beach, CA 90804, www.noclass-records.com)

TARRAKIAN – The Swarm (No Options, 12" EP)

Three long, heavy songs—well, four, if you consider "Surman Suukun 1 & 2" two separate songs, although one flows into the other. Part 1 is actually quite catchy, more of a traditional hard rock/metal tune with an early Sub Pop vibe and, although a lot of that stuff has aged badly, this is a solid song. Some of it is too sprightly to completely fall into a stoner metal category, but that's still the overall vibe, especially for "S.S. Part 2." I'd like to hear more songs like "S.S. Part 1." (PO Box 22285, Oakland, CA 94623, www.no-optionrec-ords.com)

TRANZMITORS – s/t (Deranged, CD)

A full-length album for the Tranzmitors and, with "Genocide," introducing itself with a snappy burst straight out of a late '70s power-pop mold. A balance of force and fluff—you've got your no-wave keyboards, jabbing guitar lines, Brit-affected vocals, angelic harmonizing, the works. They could be the Toronto kin to old-school British Columbians the Pointed Sticks. Sometimes, I'll find it a little too cutesy, but then a song like "Is Your Head Hollow" will come bursting through the speakers and shake things up. Shake it up nicely, in fact. (2700 Lower Rd., Roberts Creek, BC V0N 2W4, CANADA, www.derangedrecords.com)

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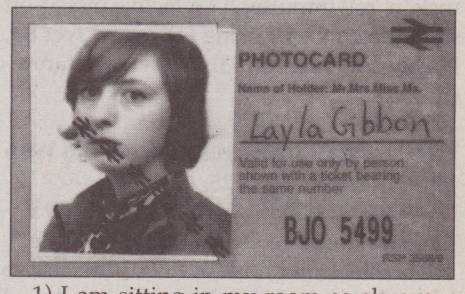

1) I am sitting in my room as always, a few days late on this whole column-writing business, listening to St. Vitus having just eaten a bunch of rice and peas. It's an exciting life I lead in this super-city of excitement and superness. Things I have been freaking out about recently:

Getting attacked by a crazy junkie dude who I stopped from stealing a bunch of Chrome messenger bags from my work, and how every customer since has merged into said crazy junkie dude. Lady with zillion-dollar handbag asking me where the books about Bhutan are? She is totally gonna attack me once she has ransacked the store of Bhutan-related goodies for her junkie lair. It is clear that the time has come for me to quit working retail before I become a crazy conspiracy theorist who hates humans and living.

I also am sick of customers asking me if it's great to work at a travel bookstore since I must get to travel a lot. I am not sure where they draw this masterful theory from. I guess most of the people who shop at our store are oblivious yuppies with savings plans and weekend warrior plans too, but dude, I work retail! I can just about pay my rent and bills. I am not going backpacking in the Himalayas anytime soon. I hate feeling like I should be doing something meaningful with my life. I am happy and broke, but I guess just bored.

2) Also, why is it that St. Vitus so good, and yet all the bands that sound like this now, in the current beard-hesh revival, are just not as interesting? Also: I went to see Kyuss when I was about 15 with members of Fabric (who also introduced me to Into Another and Septic Death) and it was the scariest show I had been to since my mum took me to see Miles Davis electric when I was ten-ish. That was terrifying— he wore a bright patchwork leather coat, refused to face the audience, and made an unholy noise I could not file away neatly. Kyuss was scary because it was completely full of huge gnarly biker dudes; I had to perch on a speaker to avoid destruction. If that show happened now it would be full of ironic huge non-gnarly non-biker dudes. Whatevers, though. I remember the music being so loud I could feel it kind of before I heard it. Same thing when I saw Melvins a year or so before; Joe Preston-era. I like that feeling, when the music seems kind of like a second skin it's so fucking loud. I went to a free bluegrass fest they have every year here, and watched Los Lobos (not bluegrass at all!) do an old Merle Haggard song with John Doe on vox. It was pretty dreamy, and there was a baby in front of me trying to get these huge blue noise-blocking headphones off its head to no avail. It made me think about going to shows since age eleven with no earplugs ever except when it actually hurts to be without.

3) Per my last column, Sex Vid are not doing a 12" after all. They decided to do a 7" or two instead. So all my worries about the corruption of hardcore via the LP were totally unfounded.

4) Another thing that I have been thinking about in regards to the Freemo scene I mentioned in my last column is the overwhelming posi-ness of it all. It's suffocatingly positive, like a reading of *I'm OK You're OK!* at a yoga retreat in a Saturday Night Live skit on '70s Marin new-age living. I consider myself to be relatively positive—cynical, yes—but not negative or hateful, but sometimes hanging out with people involved in post-art noise scenes makes me feel like I have negi-tourettes. Everyone seems like extras in that cult from *Strangers with Candy*. Maybe I should move to Cleveland. I am a dismissive bored human right now.

5) I am not actually that psyched on anything much right now, except for the fact that I am going to see the new Dead Moon band, Pierced Arrows, next week. I am so ready for this event to be life-changing I am actually going to buy tickets in case it sells out. Last time I saw Dead Moon there was a power failure and they didn't play till 3 a.m., but it made the show so much more weighted and important feeling—the epicness of the wait combined with the power that is Fred and Toody. Someone needs to send me Toody's solo EP. The first time I saw them play was in Olympia and everyone knew all the words, and they sold out the Capital theatre, so I assumed all their shows were like that. Not quite! I made my friends in England go see them, we all had the Lollipop Shoppe LP and I guess I wasn't able to explain adequately how different Dead Moon was from that. They were *not into it* and thought it was bad bar rock, which is total bullshit obviously. Dead Moon was the way and the truth. Dead Moon was genuine times, and hopefully Pierced Arrows will blow minds and break hearts in a similar way.

6) I do not like or understand the appeal of the Cro Mags but I do like Agnostic Front.

7) Right now I am not into much of anything, as mentioned, but I am into the *Propaganda Is Hippies* comp LP and the Os Estudantes 12".

8) Also: Gerry and the Holograms, Impatient Youth, Toxin III, and Ikkashinju's Slow Down. Oh and the Modern Lovers song "Someone I Care About." Also, in non-punk-related news, I have been listening to Hank Snow.

9)whatwewantisfree.blogspot.com is where I am putting all the oldies of these columns I am churning out, if you wanna read the unedited version with all the grammatical errors and spelling improvisations.

10) layla.gibbon@gmail.com

[W]henever a revolutionary upsurge comes along, drawing its strength from the bottom, without guidance from the top, the proletariat—or at least its most active segment—tends each time in differing ways and circumstances to spontaneously set up more or less identical democratic institutions. Councils are by no means particularly Soviet. Representatives democratically elected by the working people in a given locality or on a larger scale, and tending to take on legislative and executive powers, can be seen in the shop-steward committees in Britain, as well as in councils formed in Bavaria, Turin, Hungary, Catalonia, and elsewhere. The mere existence of councils does not automatically solve the problem of political power, of course. They can go on being "parallel" bodies right up until they are repressed. And historically, councils and committees set up spontaneously by workers seem to follow the initial burst of energy, with a subsequent rapid loss of momentum, due to lack of cohesion and an accelerated process of delegating responsibility.

Gérard Chaliand
Revolution in the Third World

Okay, so now for the question, the answer to which you've all been waiting for with bated breath. Why don't I consider myself an anarchist or left communist anymore? Here's the short answer.

The Paris Commune, 1871; Russia, 1905; Mexico, 1910-19; Russia, 1917-21; Ukraine, 1918-21; Germany, 1918-19, Bavaria, 1918-19; Northern Italy, 1918-21; Kronstadt, 1921; Shanghai, 1927; Spain, 1936-39; Germany, 1953; Hungary 1956; Shanghai, 1967; France, 1968; Czechoslovakia, 1968; Poland, 1970-71; Portugal, 1974; Angola, 1974; Poland, 1980-81; Argentina, 2001-02.

But, you ask, aren't these the exemplary revolutionary moments in history that both

anarchism and left communism claim in their genesis and resurgence, hail as undeniably liberatory, and consequently hold up for guidance and inspiration? Yes indeed, which brings up the much longer answer as to why I no longer profess to be part of either radical current.

Of the various examples of spontaneous revolutionary upsurge cited in the above paragraph, some considered themselves anarchist, others communist, and still others socialist. (With the rather dubious exception of France, 1968, however, none were explicitly left communist, or council communist.) Many of these upsurges never called themselves anything other than revolutionary, and anybody and everybody, including diehard Leninists, have mercilessly appropriated their history. But whatever their politics, and however liberatory their practice, these revolutionary historical moments lasted no more than a few days, weeks, or months, or in some cases a few years. Neither anarchism nor left communism has managed to create a revolutionary society that has lasted for any length of time.

"Oh, but that doesn't mean that these short-lived social revolutions collapsed because of internal problems, or social contradictions, or human nature, or anything of the sort," is often the rejoinder. "Nor is this history of failure an indication that anarchist ideas or left communist theory has failed in some fundamental way. These revolutionary moments were either crushed by the superior power of liberals, capitalists or fascists, or else Leninists, social democrats and other sordid leftists betrayed them."

Anarchists are often heard spouting this pitiful excuse, even going so far as to contend, all evidence to the contrary, that these stillborn experiences actually prove anarchism to be correct. Left communists are usually more nuanced, conscious of contradictions, and self-critical of internal problems. All subtlety aside, let's take this reasoning at face value. Shouldn't anarchists and left communists be painfully aware that social democrats and Leninists are no friends of revolution, especially of bottom-up revolution, and are perfectly willing to suppress, sabotage or seize control of them? And, if a genuine, liberatory revolution is incapable of defending itself against the forces of reaction, how will a truly revolutionary society be possible, except by sheer accident?

A social revolution has to do more than just happen. A social revolution has to be able to defend itself, not just militarily, but politically, economically, and socially. It has to be able to win out against all enemies, externally and internally, and then it has to endure. So far, nothing remotely anarchist or left communist has been able to do this.

So, let's set aside for the moment the destruction wrought by outright enemies and false comrades of these social revolutions. That leaves us with the particular mistakes and failings of the revolutionary forces themselves in each historical instance. In the Spanish Revolution, for example, the anarchists subordinated themselves to a Republican government dominated by social democrats and Stalinists out to subvert their July 1936 revolution-on-the ground, whereas the ultra-left POUM realized, too late by May 1937, that they needed to make common cause with Spanish anarchism in order to avoid the Stalinist ice pick. We can also consider the general mistakes and failings of anarchism and left communism as such. For anarchism, this includes a consistent failure to deal with the issue of power, increasing theoretical incoherence, and a pie-in-the-sky idealism that considers anarchist ideas sufficient to inspire successful anarchist revolution. For left communism, this includes an inability to sustain mass working class movements after the 1920s, a penchant for adopting undeclared revolutionary events like Hungary 1956 as its own, and the tendency to isolate itself in a meta-critique of the rest of the Left.

I think it would be a mistake to stop there, though. As Gérard Chaliand's quote at the head of this column suggests, there might be something in the very nature of these spontaneous revolutionary upsurges "from the bottom, without guidance from the top," that make the ultra-democratic institutions they give rise to insufficient to the tasks of carrying a revolution through to victory. At least, that's what I've come to conclude after forty years divided almost equally between anarchism and left communism.

I no longer think that the workers councils, factory committees, general assemblies, partisan bands, peoples militias and guerrilla armies of such social revolutions are up to the rigors of consolidating, defending and extending a revolutionary society for any significant length of time. In the crucible of the Spanish Civil War, the Friends of Durruti decided in 1937 that things weren't working, and that anarchists and ultraleftists had to radically change their strategy for the Spanish social revolution to have any chance of succeeding. Among other things, the Friends of Durruti proposed a revolutionary junta—comprised of themselves, the POUM, and the CNT-FAI—to take power, as well as the forging of a disciplined Red Army to fight Franco. I, too, think that things aren't working, in that social revolutions have uniformly failed, and that anarchism and left communism need to radically change their theory and practice as a consequence. Unlike the Friends of Durruti though, I don't have a clue as to what to recommend.

There is a rather silly notion that moments like Hungary in 1956 and France in 1968 are the orgasms of history; exciting, ecstatic, but of necessity short lived. As such, the social democratic or Leninist retrenchment that follows, even the ossification and bureaucratization of the original revolution, are all but inevitable. That's not what I'm saying. What I've concluded is that social revolution and the institutions it creates, by themselves, are insufficient to sustain a revolutionary society. A pretty harsh verdict, I know, but one that took me four decades to reach. That's forty years of studying history, engaging in theory and practice, and trying to put my politics to use in the real world.

While I can't claim to be an anarchist or left communist anymore, I haven't decided that Leninism or social democracy or some other brand of Leftism, or perhaps even liberalism, is the way to go. My commentary and analysis as "Lefty" Hooligan is still 85% left communist and 15% anarchist, as these are the political currents to which I still feel closest. But I'm actually in a kind of limbo, no longer really a part of these political milieus, yet outside the grace of knowing what is to be done. I know what hasn't been working, but I don't know what will. And while I would go to the barricades for an anarchist or left communist uprising in a heartbeat, I have no faith that it would succeed. That's the politics behind why I no longer call myself an anarchist or left communist.

If pressed, I guess I'd still call myself a communist; an unaffiliated, nondenominational, small "c" communist. After all, I haven't pulled a David Horowitz or a Larry Livermore, where I rabidly denounce everything I formerly believed in while rushing headlong to the right. In fact, I'm proud to be a commie pinko, even though, personally, I'm not too fond of most of the folks I've had to associate with, politically speaking. Again, that's the subject for a future column.

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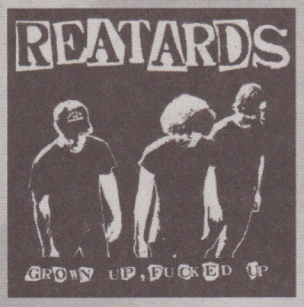

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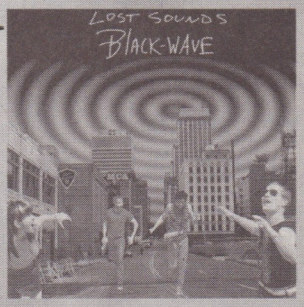

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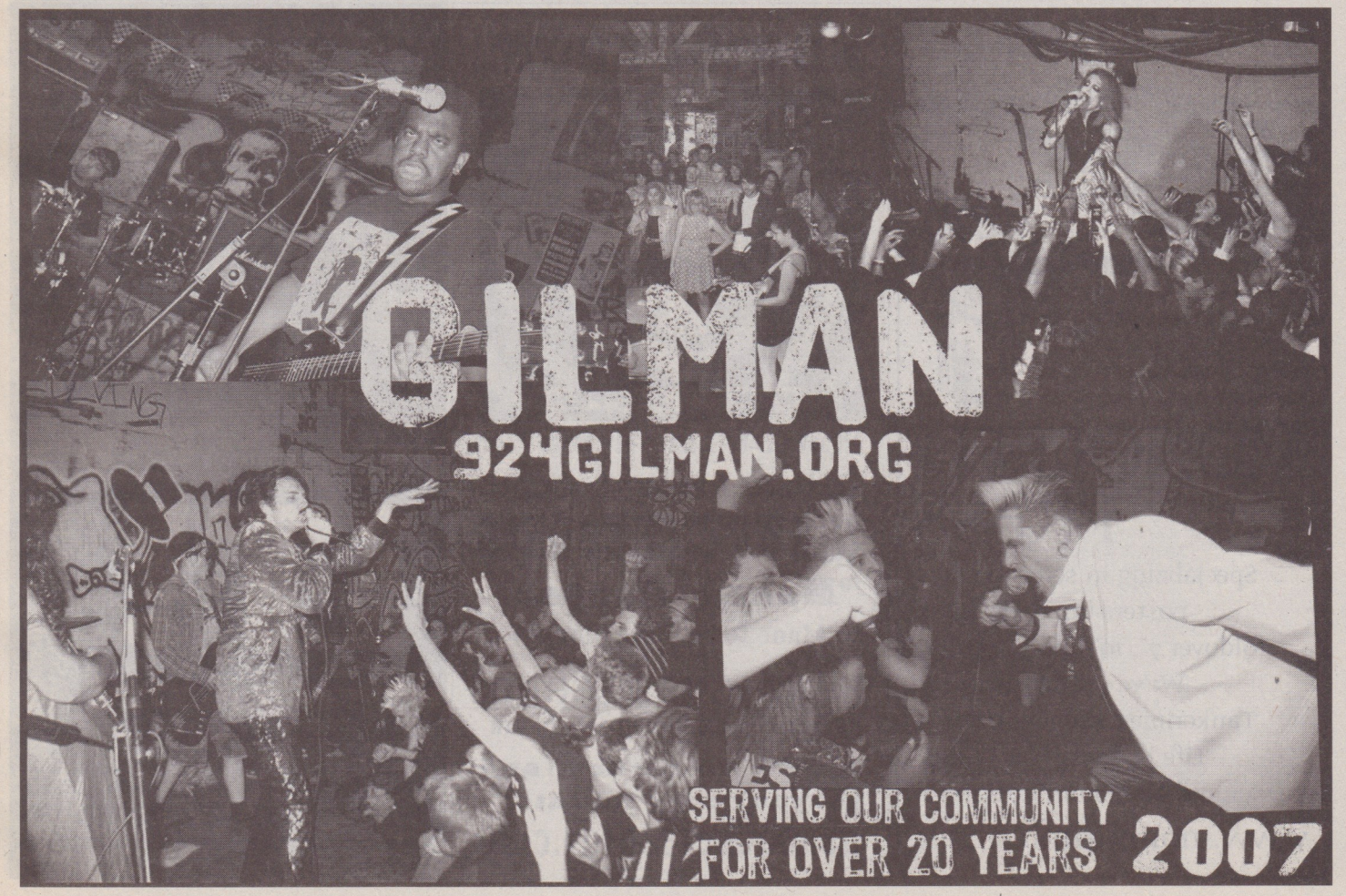

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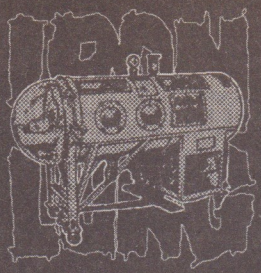

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25 – ORLANDO,FL @ TBA W/ RELIGIOUS AS FUCK, CULT RITUAL
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3 – NEW YORK, NY
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5 – PROVIDENCE, RI @ AS220
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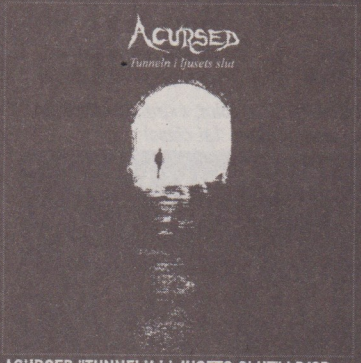

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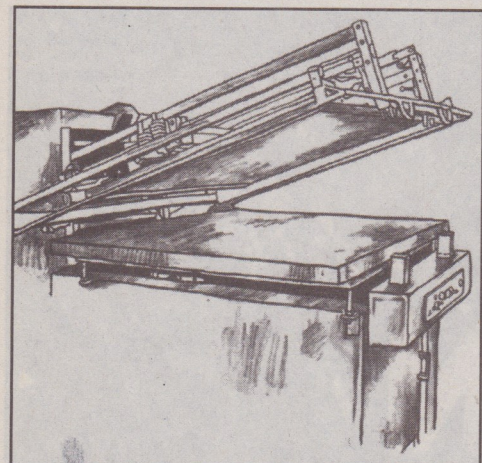

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If you are like me, you've spent a big part of your life digging through bins in used record stores and going to swap meets and yard sales looking for punk records. When I was young I remember perfecting a rapid flip to comb through bin after bin of Kansas and Captain and Tenille records looking for anything that looked cool. Back then without the knowledge base of the internet all my info came from older punk friends, *MRR* and *Flipside*. As a rule, in those days punk records were so hard to find you would buy most anything that looked cool/punk. This leads to some embarrassing missteps with what people now call power pop or new wave, but also some rewarding used bin discoveries. Years later when things like *Killed By Death* comps and the internet got rolling, a lot of that joy of discovery was quashed as the curtain was pulled back on many obscure bands and records. As a teenager I was almost entirely interested in hardcore thrash *only*. I remember pushing past the "slow" punk records just to try to find some bands with studded jackets and big hair playing fast. I probably passed on dozens of what are now "KBD bonzers" that sell for three figures because they only had two or three songs on a 7" instead of the six I deemed requisite for an unknown band to be playing fast enough. Until Vinyl Ink opened in the late '80s in DC, there were not shops that really specialized in punk, just warehouse used record stores and shops with a "punk" or "new wave" section. I turned every record store in the DC/MD/VA area inside out between '83 and '88 searching for the lost 'core. And when I moved to Minneapolis I lived in a geographically opportune area between three used record stores that I would hit in rotation on an almost daily basis.

Like most young people I had little money, but lots of time, and just dug and dug into bin after bin, as well as hitting the bimonthly record swaps with their coterie of creepy old collectors and crates of moldy worthless yard sale records. Now there are lots of stores that specialize in punk, and I hit up every one I can when I'm on tour with a band. I comb through bins and bins of mostly punk records, but find little that I actually want to buy. Times have changed, and there are a lot of records out there, but the ones that will make your hair stand on end and change your life have all been snatched up. Most store bins these days are devoid of buried treasures or lost gems waiting for discovery. Only the most diligent can still pries a sword from the stone in the crates of picked over records that have been scoured by the hungry hordes of savvy resellers and eBay sharks. People are hunting further a field, hitting yard sales, estate sales, rehab clinics, ex band members, and the like.

All those year spent digging through the chaff to find the kernels of rage led me to start paying some attention to the *non*-punk and hardcore records that were lurking in the wild. I was lucky as a kid to have original rager-hippie parents. I grew up sitting on a rug with some of those huge '70s headphones on my little head. In front of me were four peach crates of Hendrix, Stones, Who, Dylan, Pink Floyd records as well as some old blues, folk, and blue grass vinyl. I listened to every record in my parents' collection and later my mom gave me her records. As I got into my 20s and started to get a little more open minded about music I started to get curious about the roots of punk and listen to music outside of the hardcore/punk/metal orbit. Years of just hanging around used record stores and older collectors made me start to listen to advice like "you *need* that record". I must also say the *MRR* "Pioneers of Punk" articles that ran in the '90s were well written and made me want to track down a lot of bands I mostly knew by reputation.

Nowadays the majority of the best and most raging punk and hardcore records are priced out of reach, especially for a young and broke collector. However, I'd like to spend some time talking about record collecting on a budget—that is to say the many records you can still find in used bins and at swap meets for $10 or less. There are a lot of great jams out there beyond the world of punk. While I don't suggest making non-punk collecting your main focus, I would like to point out some sick records that you will inevitably flip past on your quest that are worth picking up at the right price. Below are some of my favorites that should turn up from time to time and are worth picking up. Having a well rounded collection and broad taste and knowledge of music is probably less of a distraction from hardcore than you might think. I don't think there's anything wrong with having too many records or liking several different kinds of music as long as it's all sick and/or raging.

First let's start with some obvious pioneers of punk. If you are going to be serious about music you need to nail down some staples of the proto punk scene. Most importantly the three Stooges studio LPs, The MC5's *Kick Out the Jams* and *Back In the USA*, The Modern Lovers s/t LP or demos album, or one of the many "greatest hits" type records. There's the two New York Dolls LPs, sometimes seen as a collected double album, You can probably score the first two Dictators LPs for under $5, although I don't think they are that great. Most people swear by The Velvet Underground, although I find them boring and arty, but if you flip past the one with the banana and it's priced under $10 you might as well pick it up.

The good news about most of these records is that they are either still in print, or have dozens of different pressings over the years. If you want an original, first edition with the sticker or whatever you can pay top dollar, but if you just want to crank up "Roadrunner" or "Pablo Picasso" at your next party you can probably find a later pressing for $5–$10 of any of the above. Keep in mind that even a first pressing of a sought after record drops radically in price if it's beat up. I have a lot of great '60s garage punk records that look like they survived 300 parties during the 1965 school year at *Animal House*, which I bought for $10 or less. Sure they are beat up, but the music sounds kinda cool scratchy and fucked up—like a radio transmission from a blow out kegger in 1966. I take condition seriously with hardcore punk records and my areas of collecting. But when it comes to this kind of stuff, I'm pretty happy to just have the songs on vinyl, and you can always upgrade later if you find a nicer copy.

Lets go back to issue number ten of *MRR*. The cover story was on the "'60s Punk Underground" when I first read that article I had no idea punk existed in the '60s. Now I'm jamming this stuff all the time. Good places to start are the *Pebbles*, *Back from the Grave* and *Nuggets* comps. Don't pay too much for these, as there are millions of them out there and they seem to be had easily in the $5–$10 range. Some of

these comps are hit or miss, but they are a good introduction to '60s bands. If you keep your eyes peeled you should be able to pick up trashed or later pressings of classics like The Seeds, Shadows of Knight, Question Mark and Mysterians, Blues Magoos, Troggs, Count Five, Sonics, Standells and the like for $10 or less. With the decline of the "oldies" as a radio format in America it's getting harder and harder to hear party time '60s classics like "Hanky Panky" or "Woolly Bully" except by rescuing some of these rippers from the dollar bin.

Turning the clock back a little bit further lets pick up some vinyl by the real *original ragers* of rock 'n' roll. The real wild cats of the '50s like Jerry Lee Lewis, Little Richard, Gene Vincent, and Chuck Berry. This kind of stuff has been pressed in thousands of variations so there's sure to be a '70s greatest hits comp of most every major '50s artist at a thrift store or yard sale near you for less than $5. However you slice it, these guys were wild and ahead of their time and a lot of this stuff has held up in a timeless fashion.

If you really want to dig deep you might want to pick up some old blues records. I don't know much about the blues, but two records have made a big impact on me, and rock music in general. Robert Johnson was probably *the* original of all original ragers and his haunting country blues records have influenced everyone from minimalist composers to heavy metal guitar heroes. There are two LPs on Columbia/CBS both confusingly subtitled *King Of the Delta Blues* that were pressed numerous times in the '60s and '70s you should be able to swing for $10 or so. If you don't take my advice on any records in this column, you should at least check this shit out. If I had to explain 20th century American music to a visitor from another planet I would probably hand them a copy of one of these Robert Johnson LPs. Another total old school rager I am fond of is Woody Guthrie. His "dustbowl ballads" and other folk songs of the depression capture the essence of that era and predate much of the social commentary in punk. You could spend fortune on original 78s by these cats, but rest assured there are dozens of comps and hits records from the '60s and '70s that can fill in the gaps for under $10.

I don't think I need to say too much about '60s rock, since it's still so heavily promoted by the mainstream media. That said, given my background, I don't think I would go far in life without my Hendrix, Cream, early Stones, old Who and Syd Barret-era Pink Floyd records.

Most people my age got into hardcore/punk from the world of metal and hard rock. Before I got into punk my favorite bands were AC/DC, Judas Priest, Black Sabbath, and Van Halen. It's in the heavy bands of the '70s that I first started to identify as a junior high school rebel. Quite essential in my mind is Alice Cooper's *Love It To Death*—one of the top LPs of the '70s. All early Alice Cooper is cool, but this one is a masterpiece to my ears. I probably don't need to bother, but just in case, I couldn't imagine a record collection that lacks all the Ozzy-era Black Sabbath and Bon Scott-era AC/DC vinyl. Since these records are ubiquitous you could probably get them all for less than $20 hitting a few yard sales in blue-collar neighborhoods. Some people think the Doors were overrated, I think they are OK, but you can probably survive with the *Greatest Hits* double LP and walk away without spending more than $5. The first four Van Halen LPs are in every record store for $2 or so, and I won't back them as hard as a lot of stuff in this column, but they are probably worth keeping around for when you need some inspiration to put a new muffler on your car or rebuild an engine or something like that.

T-Rex is a personal favorite and I would cite *The Slider* and *Electric Warrior* as essentials. However, there is something like nine full studio LPs plus dozens of out takes, singles comps and the like. Worth it, is the triple LP *BBC Sessions*—the first two discs are like transmissions from elder gods on a distant planet. Blue Oyster Cult were a big deal in the '70s, though I don't think many people care about them today. If you are only buying one LP, get *Some Enchanted Evening*, which is a high energy live album. I personally like *Tyranny and Mutation* and *On Your Feet or On Your Knees* quite a bit as well. While I don't care much for the political sentiments, you can't help but love the high energy rock of the first few Ted Nugent LPs and while we are getting ignorant, there's a solid three or four early '70s ZZ Top LPs in a dollar bin somewhere awaiting a spin at your next barbecue. I swear by Slade, this lad's rock is a real antecedent of bands like Cocksparrer and Sham 69, *Sladest* is a good place to start. Sweet are a little too pop-glam for me, but you might as well pick up the next copy of *Desolation Boulevard* you see priced under $5 just to have the original of "Ballroom Blitz." While we are talking glam, I'm not too heavily into David Bowie but you might want to pick up the two "hits" LPs from the late '70s *Changesone* and *Changestwo* as these are everywhere for $2–$3. If you like what you hear, this dude has like 40 LPs under his belt.

I know a lot of record collectors who take jazz really seriously. I personally, don't care much for "record collector" jazz, that is to say free jazz and be bop stuff from the '60s. My pedestrian tastes are for the '20s New Orleans and Kansas City styles and the Big Bands of the '30s. This was my grandparent's music, and I can't help but imagine a bunch of hopped up teenagers doing the Lindy Hop trying escape the depression and world war two while Duke Ellington or Benny Goodman are at the bandstand. These kinds of records are in every thrift store for next to nothing, but you have to do a little research because a lot of the big bands were playing schmaltzy ballads and tin-pan-alley pop songs as opposed to high-energy swing for dancing. I'm quite fond of the *Smithsonian Collection Of Big Band* jazz box set and the made for TV *Time Life Giants Of Jazz* box set—if you can find these for $5 or so (some people try to jack up the prices on these, don't pay too much) as a good introduction to classic jazz. I don't know much about this scene, so it's a shot in the dark, but having a box set with liner notes and such helps to navigate these waters.

I'm not too qualified to talk about Reggae or Funk. I will however stand by my collection of Parliament and Funkadelic records, especially Funkadelic *Maggotbrain* and *One Nation Under a Groove* and Parliament *Mothership Connection* and *Motorbooty Affair*. Numerous pressings of these exist, and you should be able to collect them all on vinyl for $10 or less.

To my mind the most important and influential metal record is Judas Priest's *Sad Wings of Destiny*. All metal as we know it flows from this record. You can't lose with any '70s Judas Priest, and these are pretty common in the $4–$5 range. My favorites are *Stained Class* and *Sin After Sin* although most people seem to prefer their '80s output. Still the kings of all metal. Digging through used bins you will eventually come across a number of early Deep Purple LPs and they are probably all worth picking up if you like heavy rock and proto metal.

You will find out quickly that underground psychedelic rock, like it's '60s garage cousin, is a rare and expensive field to collect much like hardcore, if not more so. However, there are a lot of big name psych and hard rock bands from the '60s and '70s lurking in used bins that are worth checking out. The "acid rock" volumes of *Nuggets* are a good place to start. The first two or three Love albums are hard to beat.

There's always a Steppenwolf or Iron Butterfly record at every yard sale or used record store. I think I still have Steppenwolf on 8-Track too. I mentioned Cream, Hendrix and early Pink Floyd above, but you might also check out Hawkwind, Uriah Heep, and some early King Crimson when you see it around. Hawkwind is pretty collectible but there are a lot of cheaper reissues with flimsy covers around. Harder to find would be anything related to Mick Farren, The Deviants, or Twink, but there are some cheaper reissues around and this stuff is still pretty cult, especially if you like things like *drugs* and *Stonehenge*. I've been interested in '70s psych and hard rock lately and have been pretty disappointed by a lot of bands. Many of them had one good album and then a lot of shoddy output. Some bands only had one good *song* and the rest is pretty weak. But if you dig deep into this stuff there's some heavy rippers, like Sir Lord Baltimore *Kingdom Come* LP, Lucifers Friend s/t LP, and May Blitz *The Second Of May*. One band I've recently gotten really into (after reading about them in *MRR* many years ago) is The Pretty Things. Their *SF Sorrow* and *Parachute* are masterpieces of British psychedelic rock. Like anything, the originals are very expensive rarities, but there are some reissues from the '80s that can be found for $10 or so with some work. Why this band never got as big as other bands of the British Invasion is still a mystery to me. And speaking of the British Invasion, you can't lose with any early Kinks record, real ancestors of everything from Mod to Pop Punk to Power Pop, but in my opinion better than most of the genres they influenced. Somewhere between blues-rock and pop-psych would be The Yardbirds whose greatest hits LP will be in any used record store and is worth playing a few times a year for sure.

I don't know too much about surf or rockabilly, but it probably doesn't hurt your record collection to pick up some standouts in each of those genres as well.

Above are some suggestions of bands and records I picked up on the periphery while searching for hardcore records. Some of those records I listen too quite a bit now, some I only spin once every few years. While I don't recommend suspending your hardcore collecting to start amassing '60s and '70s rock records, there are some pretty cool tunes out there that you can pick up when you see them at a good price, and eventually you'll have a pretty well rounded collection of cult and influential records as well as serious party time bangers without spending more than a few hundred bucks over a period of several years. See you at the next swap meet!

My Mother's Hands

All this phlegm in my throat, is that what I get? Just phlegm in my throat—actually, the phlegm started when the sadness began to clear just a little bit, that's when I sat down at the computer; I mean the sadness cleared a little bit just when I sat down! It doesn't always work that way.

It's hard to figure out whether this sadness, exhaustion, mind overwhelm is different than usual or just a particularly tiring day. But then I realize I'm thinking about cocktails; maybe it would be nice to go back to Millennium, the posh vegan restaurant where I ate with my mother, and sit down for cocktails—Love Potion Number 9 is what I got—pomegranate juice, lemon and herbs in a martini glass, but Love Potion Number 10 contains vodka, yes, vodka! Just yesterday I was marveling about how I never think about cocktails anymore and then boom, my mother visits and look at me now.

When my mother gets to the door she looks different—hair longer and pulled back a little, and I guess she's not wearing makeup, maybe that's the difference, but also there's the aging process; all her freckles make her look distinctive, engaged. We go to the hardware store to look for dehumidifiers I can put in my cabinets to maybe help prevent mold, and on the way back it's hard to get a cab, yes, a cab, because my mother's carrying things and she doesn't like to take buses. Not that I'm a big fan of buses, either, but we end up walking kind of far and then we're back at my house and the outside muscles on both of my legs feel so tense I must be holding myself differently. Or just the walk, the walk could be tiring.

Then we're in my apartment, my mother's assessing what needs to be replaced: do you need both of the sofas, definitely new kitchen chairs; is there other furniture you need? I like both of those sofas because it's like a little living room, I'm not worried about these chairs, what I need to do something about is the mold.

At Millennium, I ask for a table in the coolest part of the restaurant, but they seat us right next to the kitchen. The food's good but not that good, considering that the only time I go here is when someone's taking me. I mean, it's too expensive—Love Potion Number 9 is actually the best part, there are hot peppers hiding in the braised greens and the roasted beets have too much balsamic vinegar on them. My main course tastes kind of uniform without any explosions of intrigue. My mother wants to talk about what kind of pharmaceutical medicine I can try to help my pain, what I can do to make a living even when I can hardly do anything—even when she just inherited $4.5 million and I've already asked her for what I want, an account to pay my basic expenses so that then I can worry about trying to get better, doing the things that mean something to me. My mother wants to buy me things but she doesn't want to ensure my security.

So my mother's wondering if there's pharmaceutical medicine I can try, pharmaceutical medicine that's never done anything for me except make things worse and then I have to get off the shit—I mean when I was trying those sleeping pills and everything got so much worse, other than that I've just tried a pill here and there if it ruined my life overnight I knew it was time to stop. Different than mixing Xanax with a few cocktails, lines of coke maybe a little bit of K and pot to smooth it over and take me to the sky. That's all in the past now—what I'd like to think, at least.

But when I talk about incest, my mother doesn't seem scared—maybe a little scared, but so am I—I'm talking about that movie *Truths and Transformations* and it was originally about gay marriage, then gay marriage and a gay man who came out when he was 60, then gay marriage and a gay man who came out when he was 60 and me. The commonality in our lives: abuse by our families. My mother doesn't flinch, I mean she disappears a little bit, but not as much as in the past and this gives me something I don't know what, and we go to Walgreens and get razors, contact lens solution, replacement heads for the electric toothbrush, a WaterPik—her credit card doesn't go through because she just used it. I say, soon enough you'll need to send a fingerprint through your cell phone.

Walking back to my apartment, the air is so fresh, my mother says, that's right the air is so fresh. She thinks they could do more work in the lobby of my building to make it

more attractive. I say, it's not that kind of building. She wants to know why I chose this building in particular. I say, because it's exactly where I want to live, the apartment was five times nicer than anything else I looked at, the view is amazing. Back upstairs, she looks out the window and oh, she says—you're right, the view.

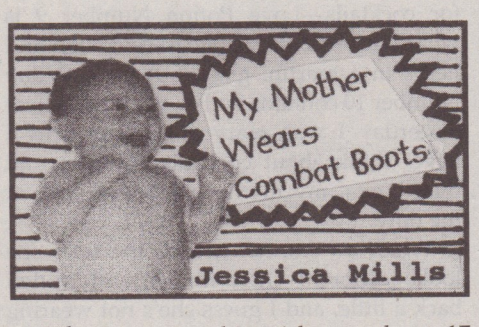
I don't know anything about the world, that's what I'm thinking after I walk my mother downstairs and then I'm back upstairs again—I don't know anything about the world except that it drains me. I mean, I know how to hail a cab. I know how to use voice activation software. I know how to do feldenkrais instead of stretches—stretches push and push against the muscles, feldenkrais continues the movement—actually maybe I don't know how to do that so well. I still don't really know how to breathe, no, not really. As a kid I had to hold it all in or risk everything. This didn't make me safer, just alive; I didn't want to die there, no, not yet. Not even with his hands around my neck maybe I could just go further up, up, no I didn't want to come down, no, not ever. Maybe if I stayed still, like some creature trying to blend into a leaf. Maybe I could disappear into a book.

Nothing worked. Eventually I learned to escape, different ways of risk until it all comes back full circle; no, I'm not that little kid with his hands around my neck, no I'm not that broken toy can't keep winding me no I'm not the one my mother called for from the bathroom: can you get me a washcloth? Always something else in the bathroom, something besides a washcloth my father's hair from shaving cutting his own hair caking the floors and my mother's blood, my mother's blood where it was supposed to be this time of the month except why the washcloth, why me and the washcloth? Why do you need another fucking washcloth, me?

Oh that bathtub was so small, that room and the metallic bloody odor lingering in my nostrils, pink tiles with gray, mold in the grout, I studied the mold in the grout, why. Years later in San Francisco when I first started remembering I had a friend who would sleep over a lot, sometimes I couldn't stand the way she smelled in bed I didn't know why I didn't want to say anything I didn't know what it was until much later—that time of the month, my mother's blood she kind of looked like my mother too the freckles a similar complexion. I thought I was writing about safety, even just the financial kind right it's a start, then I can focus on finding the rest. I want rest, yes, I want rest but it always comes back to my nose pressed into the carpet, all I knew was pain so much pain can they put it back together, me? The burlap sack, where's my head, that knife. My father's eyes, black pins. Bull's-eye.

I don't know anything about the world except that my father died and never told me anything. I wanted his logic so badly, I wanted him to fill in the blanks, I wanted something simple like I'm sorry I want to help you now, what can I do? Or even I love you, I love you I wish I hadn't ruined it all I wish I could've held you without so much violence my mother's hands no I don't know my mother's hands I don't know I don't know I don't know.

Check out my new anthology, *Nobody Passes: Rejecting the Rules of Gender and Conformity*, and tell me what you think! You can also check in on me via my blog, nobodypasses.blogspot.com. I live for feedback, so send me love letters and/or delicious threats via www.mattbernsteinsycamore.com, which includes past *MRR* columns (and soon it will be updated to the present!) Or you can write to me at 537 Jones Street, #3152, San Francisco, CA 94102.



When my now-big girl was about 17 months old, I left town for four days without her so I could play a few shows 3000 miles away; it was our first time apart overnight. For a couple weeks prior to my leaving, I'd felt the kind of separation anxiety that up until then, I thought only affected children—and I hadn't even left yet. Though more experienced parents reassured me that all would be fine, I remained uncertain.

All turned out more than fine. No tears were shed when she and Daddy 'Nesto dropped me off at the airport; in fact, she cheerily waved me goodbye. They bonded while I was out reclaiming a part of my life I'd been missing. Even my painfully engorged-with-breast-milk boobs were a source of entertainment one night while I made DIY White Russians and shared them with unsuspecting, already-drunk-but-eager-to-drink-more punks at the club we'd played. And I really, really enjoyed that first night of uninterrupted-by-baby sleep in nearly a year and a half.

So this time around, leaving baby number two for our first time ever apart overnight, I wasn't anxious for a couple weeks prior to leaving, I was only anxious for two days prior. I don't know what morbid love-your-kids-too-much phenomenon gets a hold of me, if it's just run of the mill separation anxiety, but it's pretty unsettling thinking I might not ever see my two daughters again. Pretty tweakin' ridiculous, I know, but still, shit's been known to happen.

This time, baby was 19 months old, I was only going for two days 1000 miles away, and instead of going to play shows, I was going to celebrate their tenth anniversary with Karoline and Robert, both of whom I've had the pleasure of touring with over the years. When Karoline called to inquire about my being able to make it for their anniversary party show, I wasn't feeling too hopeful. We'd just moved for the second time in less than a year and were therefore financially strapped until the first paycheck came.

Resolved that this is just how life goes when you've got two kids, it was perfect timing when 'Nesto got the call that we'd be getting a bit of unexpected cash. It'd been four years since the anti-FTAA actions in Miami where 'Nesto had gotten his ass whooped in a cop riot and thrown in jail for a couple days. But the suit against the government in which he was one of the plaintiffs was finally settled, thanks to the Center for Constitutional Rights. The next day, he bought me a ticket to party!

I was so excited; my new neighbors thought I was one of those manic moms that don't get out enough. They were right. I could barely contain myself.

Whereas six years ago my now-big girl cheerily waved me goodbye at the airport resulting in a guilt-free trip for me, this time, baby shrieked, with arms outstretched, "Mama! Mama!" An emotional tug worse than guilt jolted me in the heart as I quickly kissed her goodbye and dashed to the check-in counter. The cursed tweaky morbid stuff crossed my mind again as I fumbled at the self-serve kiosk. Grabbing up my boarding passes, I hustled to the gate to assume the position I'd hold for the remainder of my 48 hours of freedom—not a moment wasted—not on mama emotion and not on eye contact with fellow passengers.

I buried my nose in a book I'd been wait-

ing forever to read, deep enough so that no one around would dare talk to me. I was hell-bent on not wasting my precious alone-time on small talk with lonely strangers. Maybe I'll be lonely some day, but these days, with a toddler and a second-grader grader, I barely get to piss alone. I was especially skilled at ignoring and giving no sympathy to folks around me traveling with small, demanding children. I was quite content to not be in their shoes for once.

As promised, SuperFriend Ramsey picked me up at the San Francisco airport and whisked us into the city to meet up with Karoline and friends for an all-you-can-eat (not to be confused with the band—I'll get to them shortly) Ethiopian dinner. We took our time talking and eating, eating and talking, before it was time for the show.

The show!

The overwhelming fun started out on the sidewalk before we even made it inside. Friends from all over were gathering, mega-hugging if we hadn't seen each other in years. I spent too much time outside and missed the first band. Instead, Wicks and I made our way to the bar. A Guinness for me, a tallboy PBR for him. Still uncommitted to either staying relatively sober or getting shit-faced drunk, I savored every chug of that Guinness.

When it was gone in record time, we made our way upstairs in time for ZERO CONTENT, Fly doing her thing solo all the way from NYC. She had most of the room cracking the fuck up—so loud, so animated, so straight-up hilarious. From frozen piss buckets in the squat to decades-old colonies of body bugs, she had all her artful characters ripping through the mic.

While I was back at the bar for more Guinness, I ran into a slew of folks I hadn't seen in years. We all commented on what an amazing ability Robert and Karoline have at bringing people together. It was true. Had it not been so dark in there, I'm sure I would have recognized quite a few more folks from over the years of touring and punk rockery in general.

ALL YOU CAN EAT started to play. I rushed closer to get a better view of their US Air Guitar Champion, Craigums. There was Karoline, right up front too, taking in her 100th time seeing them play, apparently very happy about it. I hurried my beer again, this time so I wouldn't lose it in the crowd of all the other apparently very happy people. Appropriately, ALL YOU CAN EAT eventually busted out some Hickey tribute songs and homemade shirts, as this night was also the anniversary of Matty Luv's passing. The crowd got a bit more riled up, grabbing the mic to sing Matty's words loud, and it ended with Devon's naked ass jumping up on and all over Robert's unsuspecting lap.

More Guinness. And one more after that, money gone and not feeling drunk. It didn't make any sense because these days, all it takes is two beers and I'm buzzed. I attributed my still feeling sober to the sustained adrenaline rush and my extreme excitability canceling out the effects of the alcohol. I felt my decision was then made. I'd not get shit-faced drunk. Instead, I'd enjoy my second day of freedom without a hangover.

Wicks, however, had another plan. After we rocked the fuck out to IRON LUNG, he bestowed upon me a demotion from Guinness to PBR followed by interludes of whiskey sours. What a pal! I all of a sudden couldn't focus on watching TALK IS POISON and they were shredding right in front of me! Hello, shit-faced drunk.

Show over and people outside scrambling to make after-show plans, the clock five minutes from striking 2 a.m. when more beer wouldn't be an option for the rest of the evening, ahem, early morning, Arwen (yes, the very same Arwen of this here *MRR*) and I broke into a sprint down the street to the closest store. Strangers goading us with, "Run! Run!" I breathlessly called back out to them, "For beer!" They started cheering us on, "Yeah! Run for beer!"

Must have been their moral support, because when we arrived, the gates were being closed, but for some reason, we were let in to buy a twelve-pack of PBR.

Walking the eight blocks to Arwen's seemed like forever, but that's probably because I was out of my freaking mind with happy-drunk-face and awe at the freedom to be out stumble-walking the streets of a far from home big city with seven friends I hardly ever get to hang out with. Hours and beers and a bottle of wine and whatever else later, it was time to get going.

Sober SuperFriend Ramsey gave me his brand new, ridiculously bright yellow TALK IS POISON shirt to wear so I wouldn't freeze on the retreat back to his car. I asked if he wanted me to wear such a heinously reflective yellow thing so that oncoming traffic would have an easier time seeing me if I strayed off the sidewalk.

Five hours later, we woke at 10:30 am. Ramsey told me, handing me a much-needed glass of water, that it was both the latest he's stayed out and slept in. Lying around for hours in bed and on the kitchen floor, my coming and going headache and pickled, fuzzy brain did their best with conversation. A plate full of hot, healthy food helped and we eventually made it out of the house. I knew the trade-off for a night of too much intoxicated fun would be in exchange for being able to fully enjoy the next day's worth of freedom, and I was right.

Even after taking it easy all day and being amongst a great nine-person gathering for dinner around a large round table with friends I adore, back at Ramsey's I could only muster enough energy for two rounds of my signature DIY White Russians, three games of backgammon, and a couple hours of precious talk time with Karoline before we drifted off to sleep.

I flew home first thing the next morning. Repeating my "don't talk to me" stance by having my nose buried in a book while waiting at the gates and on both planes, I was feeling much less hung over and wanting to savor these last hours of not being mama.

Landing back home in Albuquerque, tears filled my eyes as I waited for my bag—a mix of joy and sorrow. Joy at having had 48 mama's-off-duty hours. Sorrow that it would be a while before I'd be able to be mama-off-duty again. I wanted to stretch out my independence and take the city bus home instead of being picked up, but there was no Sunday bus service.

Back at home, it was genuinely sweet to be snuggled so warmly; I could tell both my girls had missed me. 'Nesto said they'd had a great time together and I could tell. My big girl, who'd been nervous about me leaving the baby for the first time, said things were much easier than she'd expected. She'd even helped sing the baby back to sleep one of the times she'd woken during the night and had gotten up out of bed trying to find me. That was a pretty big deal considering any previous times when the baby had cried looking for me, like when I'd just gone out for a few hours, my big girl would start crying too.

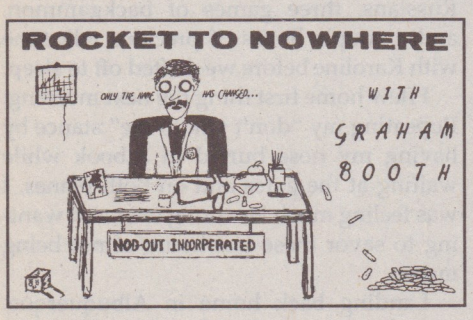
Gone for only 48 hours, but such a big milestone deal. Baby, although she would have preferred it had I not left, was totally fine without me. Big girl rose to the big sister occasion. And as always, 'Nesto was the perfectly accommodating papa, just as he should be (even though he'd taken the girls to the pound and adopted a puppy, against my wishes, but that story is for another time…)

Physically gone for only 48 hours, it

took me another 48 hours to get my brain to come back home, too. I was in limbo there for a while, feeling too much of a contrast between the reality of my daily family life at home and the super-speedy, overindulgent out-of-town party weekend. But it's a good feeling now, to be able to put it all in perspective and recognize that there needs to be more balance in my life—the mama me needs more family-free time so I don't blow a freakin' gasket every time I'm off duty!

Punkparents, get in touch – yardwide-yarns@hotmail.com

P.S. – Karoline and Robert, here's to the next ten years! It'll be interesting to see how you top this one!



Ahhh, family vacations. It's been 15 years, but this past weekend I got to reunite with my immediate family on a four-day jaunt to Northern California wine country to celebrate the 'rents' 40th wedding anniversary. That can mean only one thing: *drama*. It's amazing how in just five minutes with the "Fam," all the old baggage and buried skeletons come crashing back to life. Add in a few layers, like a newborn nephew (and another one on the way) and three siblings entering middle age all struggling to find themselves, and you've got all the fixin's for a TV mini series. I cannot deal!

Lucky for my wife and me, we had a rental car. Somehow we ended up with a hybrid car, a Toyota Prius. Only in San Francisco! Among the factory-installed accessories were an on/off switch, a digital readout screen showing us where the power was coming from at any given moment, and—are you ready—a CD player!

This may not sound remarkable to you, but this was my first time driving a car with a CD player. I suspected that might be the case, so I came prepared with all three CDs I own: a MISFITS *Walk Among Us* CD purchased online (I thought I was buying an LP), a SYD BARRETT *Barrett* CD purchased at a garage sale a few weeks ago, since I figured the chances of me finding the original LP were slim, and a *Nuggets* compilation promo CD for the box set that I somehow ended up with.

This last CD—a *Nuggets* primer, if you will—got repeated spins, providing ample solace for an otherwise emotionally draining weekend. It's hard to imagine culling the entire "garage" cadre down into a four-CD set, let alone a single promo CD. I'll be honest, I find many of the selections innocuous, or elevator-music-esque. We've all grown up listening to many of these songs on oldies radio stations, so it can be difficult to think of "Incense and Peppermints" by STRAWBERRY ALARM CLOCK or "Double Shot" by SWINGING MEDALLIONS as something revolutionary or angst-ridden. At least they're memorable songs, which is hard to say about what they play on the radio these days.

My wife and I had an eye-rolling experience while driving my younger sister around. We were on track three, MOUSE (& THE TRAPS)' "A Public Execution" having just heard Chicago's own KNICKERBOCKERS "Lies," and she remarked, "Hmmm, isn't it strange how all of these songs sound like they are just copying someone else, like the BEATLES, or now BOB DYLAN?" Well, DUH! What do you think garage music is? There is not much you can say to a comment like that, so I was happy to crank the music and be on our way.

A couple paragraphs ago I said something about "innocuous blah blah blah." Yeah, there are a few snoozers, but there are some total monsters too! MUSIC MACHINE's "Talk Talk" may seem like an obvious pick, but I continue to have my mind blown by the scorching fuzz lead, tough punk vox, and total mindfuck of a complicated song. I cannot believe how many twists and turns they take for such a totally dumb-sounding song. So great!

The SONICS' "The Witch" is a no-brainer, although I would have a hard time picking just one SONICS song. They have like three albums of totally awesome songs! That is very rare for a '60s garage band; most were lucky if they could get one good single. (Yes, you should buy them.) And they have a saxophone! (Yes, you should still buy them.) The SONICS are soooooo good. I always get weirded out looking at photos of them and hearing that guy's voice; he's like seven feet tall and looks and sounds like the rejected third RIGHTEOUS BROTHER. I imagine he'd stick me with a switcher if he heard that! Fuck yeah, SONICS!

CHOCOLATE WATCH BAND was another really consistent garage band, from Santa Cruz, no less. Their main influen...er, "source" for material was the ROLLING STONES, and I have a personal affinity for their dark and moody sound. "Are you gonna be (at the Love In)" is their most famous song, but they have a good album worth of total classics.

I discovered Boston's the REMAINS a few years ago on their Eva LP reissue from the '80s. The French Eva label, along with the US Moxie label provided some of the best reissues/compilations in the early '80s, and I would wager that the majority of releases on either label are worth several listens. Totally unlike Italy's wholly inconsistent Rave Up label for punk reissues. Anyways, the REMAINS "Don't Look Back" was the *Nuggets* choice, and it's hard to argue, though I would probably pick the moodier, wide-eyed "Once Before" as my fave. I was browsing at Amoeba in LA recently, and recognized the intro to "Don't Look Back," only to realize that I was witnessing a live in-Store performance by the recently reformed BARRY & THE REMAINS! It is amazing how Barry's voice still sounds like he's 17—he must be in his sixties by now. Definitely check them out if you get the chance.

So those are some of my favorite bands. If any of my words sound remotely interesting, I strongly encourage you to seek out the comp and/or other releases by these bands for a primer on '60s garage sounds.

Of all the songs on the comp, there was one that left me totally aggravated. THE 13TH FLOOR ELEVATORS do their "You're Gonna Miss Me" which is another undisputed classic. For the past two years I have been listening to this song almost daily at work in MP3 format. It appears that I have an MP3 of an early 45 version of the song, and *Nuggets* used a later "cleaned-up" sounding version. This really pissed me off. Somehow they cut out some of the high end and distortion, leaving the song flat and totally wuss.

I Hate "cleaned-up" recordings! Maybe there is a song somewhere that actually benefited from the process, but in my experience, these do-gooders end up removing all of the best elements of any given song. Distortion? Gain? More, please! So what if it sounds like it is blowing out your speakers? That's how it was meant to sound. Can you imagine if they tried to remove the static on a CONFUSE record? What's the point in even listening? Puh-lease! If you are ever involved in the reissue of a record and you're considering tweaking levels and distortion, don't do it! I wouldn't have my music any other way!

Of course, no vacation would be complete without a visit to at least one local record store. I've never hit the shops (shop?) of the North Bay, so I was dead set on visiting at least one. It was hard—scratch that, try "nearly impossible"—to squeeze in just 45 minutes of record time into a 96-hour period, but thanks to a solid afternoon of wine-tasting, my next of kin were adequately sauced and ready for a 5:00 nap. Good thing that I called the evening's destination from my Novato hotel room; they informed me that they would be closing at 6:00 sharp...better start driving!

I arrived at Red Devil Records in San Rafael at 5:15, which afforded me 45 minutes of vinyl gluttony. I wasn't expecting to find any really great punk records, or at least any bargain prices, since I know that much of *MRR*'s readership visits said store several times a week. Guess what? I was right: not much in the punk realm (or at least that I don't already own). You guys are apparently picking them dry!

But that didn't stop me. I hit the "world music" section, seeking out my current genre of obsession, "ethnic" field recordings. You may be familiar with the Folkways record label, which released literally thousands of records loosely based around "folk music" from around the world. The records I am interested are literally transcriptions of tapes made by anthropologists visiting different remote areas around the world. Like, a researcher guy would go on a vacation in Australia to seek out an Aboriginal tribe in the middle of nowhere, bring a tape recorder along and record for a couple of days. Folkways is the main US label releasing these types of records in the '60s, '70s and '80s, although there were also several European labels, including Ocora, Argo, Unesco, and a variety of others. Usually the packaging and liner notes (usually a gatefold with a booklet inside) are exquisite, so even if you can't get with the yodeling or chanting, you'll have a beautiful package to peruse.

I had overlooked records like this for years; I guess all of us have ideas of what a "Native African Tribe" sounds like or something—no big deal. But over the past year or so I've heard some clips of some of the stranger ones on music blogs and elsewhere. I was pretty blown away at some of the sounds. I guess there is a "primitive" component to all of it, but the sounds are so alien, and sometimes so complex or counter-intuitive. It is like trying to understand a completely different language. The sound patterns don't work in the same predictable ways, it's rad to hear something truly different from everything I've ever heard, and when I get tired of hearing the same old punk songs, it's good to have a break.

Yeah, blah, blah, I don't really expect many of you to go buy any field recordings, but if you want somewhere to start, you might try finding some recordings of Pygmies or Music of the Himalayas or any of Hugh Tracey's recordings. It may seem like you're listening to an elementary school film strip at first, but you can get over it!

As luck would have it, Red Devil just happened to be consigning a gigantic ethnic collection last week. During those brief 45 minutes, I was literally grabbing title after title of Unesco randomness. I think the craziest record I got was a Canadian record of Inuit Chants (yeah, that's like Eskimos). I was in hog heaven! The best part is, 99 percent of you could probably care less about it! I love me!

Sensing my rabid desire for all things ethnic, the store owner even gave me first crack at the "African box" that was going out the next day. By the end of the evening, I had a pile of about 30 LPs, at least 20 of them ethnic recordings. Thinking nothing of it, I handed over my credit card to pay. For the first time ever, I was recognized by one of my readers...and he read it directly off of my credit card! Who knew? I apparently blew his mind with my decidedly unpunk pile of records. Hey, I need to be able to find something at record stores, don't I? Actually, after this weekend's haul, I probably don't need to buy another record...at least for a few weeks! Keep diggin'!

Bedtime for Mediocrity

Does punk rock inherently breed mediocrity? Looking at the glut of shit-looking, shit-sounding records that we manage to churn out year on year, I'd have to say it does. Obviously, not all punk records look or sound shit, and there are vast differences in aesthetic tastes. Personally I appreciate rawness in a recording and a certain rough and ready graphic style. But as a whole, I think we have learned to tolerate an unacceptable level of shittiness. Unintelligible flyers. Boring zines. Unimaginative (or simply stolen) record art. Shoddy musicianship. "It's cool; it's punk, right?" When did "punk" become an excuse for doing something half-assed?

There are, of course, often very valid financial reasons for doing things low- (or no-) budget. One of the best things about punk is that you don't need a lot of money or a lot of musical skill to get started, but just because something *is* cheap doesn't mean it has to look or sound that way. I know you've got a shitty guitar and borrowed amp because it's all you can afford. It costs nothing at all to figure out (or ask someone) how to get a good sound out of what you've got. "Nah, dude; it's punk." Turn up two minutes before your band is supposed to play, ask to borrow someone's amp, plug in a crappy Metal Zone pedal, and you're good to go.

This attitude is crippling us. No wonder attendance at punk shows is dwindling. People are reluctant to spend even a nominal fee of $5 because let's face it, the chances are that three out of the five bands on any given night are probably going to be mediocre. The preferred venue for punk is now the basement or house party, because while the crappy bands howl and squawk away to their five friends, everyone else can drink their 40s in the backyard or kitchen and talk about single-track bikes or some new trust-fund art-gallery-slash-clothing-store that their friend opened or something.

And that $5 thing. People complain that $5 is too low these days, what with the price of petrol and everything. I couldn't agree more, but bands are lucky if they can even get that much now. The best they can hope for is that someone at the filthy punkhouse they're playing at has the wherewithal to aggressively hit up the crowd for a "donation for the touring band." People's expectations for punk bands are so low now that bands play not for a guarantee, not for a cut of the door, but in the eager hope that they will please a group of jaded underage drinkers enough that they will spill a few coins from their beer fund into a hat at the end of the night. That's not touring, that's busking.

For other styles of music, people queue up to buy tickets in advance. They get excited about going to shows. They don't toss the bands a couple of crumbs as an afterthought.

I dunno what the answer is. In the long run the good bands seem to do all right and

the bad ones either break up or keep plugging away without really going anywhere. Again, they're not really harming anyone, but they are diluting the gene pool, know what I mean?

I feel like I get quite curmudgeonly in this column. One could get the impression that I don't like punks or punk rock. Far from it—I just think we should hold ourselves to a higher standard. I judge myself the harshest. I've come to realize that I have accepted mediocrity in my own life for far too long. All my life I felt different, and then punk came along and showed me there was another way. I didn't have to follow the established path. I successfully avoided the pitfalls of a normal life but along the way I defined myself by what I didn't want to be. So I never became a square, so what? Now what? Everything I learned I taught myself. Never went to school, never had a career. I'm approaching middle age with little to show for my years but a woefully inadequate record collection. "What did you do with your life?" "I was a punk." What does that mean? Am I an idiot for wanting it to be something to be proud of, instead of feeling like I'm (we're) selling myself (ourselves) short?

It's confusing when you devote so much of your energy to something that most people get into, pass through, and leave a few years, graduating to hipster bar DJ nights. Those punk tattoos used to keep you out of the corporate workplace, but now cool-hunting ad agencies, design studios, etc., fall over themselves to show how edgy they are.

I never picked punk up like a new outfit to try on and throw away when the fashion changed. It was already well out of fashion by the time I found it (or rather, it found me). Punk was there when I had nothing else, so it's not something I can easily forget about. I don't know what brought on this crisis of confidence. I'm trying to start speaking up for myself. When (non punk) people ask what I do, rather than mumble something about whatever dead-end job is currently paying the bills, I'll say I'm a musician and a writer. Eagerly, they'll ask about the music or the writing. "What's your band called? I'll look for the records in the shops!"

"You're a writer? Where have you been published?" "Ermm, well, the records are all out of print because we only pressed 300, but it might be available either through the post from some distro in the Midwest or maybe on a stall at a twelve-band thrash festival in someone's shed. The writing, well, all fifty copies of the last issue of my zine are sold out but I've still got the originals somewhere so I can photocopy it for you if my mate is still working at Kinko's..."

I'm being negative, I know. On the positive side, I'm extremely lucky that I've even managed to put out records at all, and been in bands that have toured the US and Europe. I guess right now it just doesn't feel like it's adding up to much. I'm not sure what's missing, but stick around with me while I try to find out. And above all, don't accept mediocrity, from yourself or from those around you.

Apologies for the lack of a column last month. Did you think I'd been deported due to the seditious nature of my column in the Immigration issue? Nah, I'm still here.

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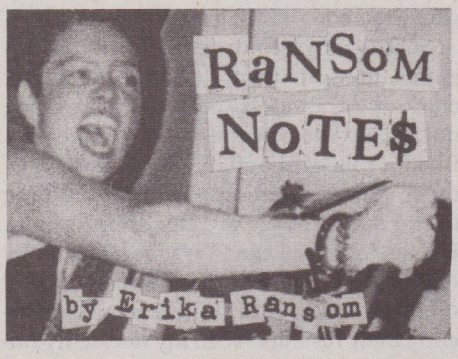


Subhumans US Tour 2007, as told by Erika, the Drinking Pirate Roadie

"Drink sex cigarette
Ford cortina household pets
Bombs? War? Famine? Death
An apathetic public couldn't care less
The things you never knew were there
Or was it that you didn't care
The biggest problem face to face/ an apathetic human race"
—The Subhumans, 1985

Saturday, August 25. The Beginning.

Bright blue sky, big lazy clouds, cruising through the American countryside, an afternoon spent sitting in the van, driving from Milwaukee towards Minneapolis. Pine trees, fields of corn, big red wooden farmhouses, the occasional billboard advertising the next McDonald's or Motel 6. I drink my gas-station coffee, settle in, and watch it all roll by.

Early Sunday morning, I was at the Active stall at the London Vegan Festival, putting ALF and animal rights pins onto the display sheet, checking out the lovely vegan cupcakes at the Pogo Café stall next door. A few hours later, I walked to the Tube, bags in tow, off to Heathrow. That evening, I caught my flight across the Atlantic.

I arrived on the east coast Monday afternoon, and after a long flight, an hour of going through customs in Logan, my head full of sawdust, I finally made my way to Sister Sorrel in the South End in Boston, catching Gro at the end of her shift at the bar. The only decision to be made was whether to sleep now or to just keep going.

For better or worse, I decided on the later, and soon we were back in Allston, cold cans of Pabst in hand and catching up with our adventures of the summer. Gro and I met the gang at Great Scott that evening to see Mechannibal, and I danced to their classic breakdowns, reminding me of the bands that first brought me to the Rat. Hell yeah. The night went on and I finally collapsed near dawn, too many hours of being awake, totally spent.

I had two days of catching up with James, Gro, Lucho, Mara, and Brendan, doing errands around town on my bike, glad to see the Boston streets again.

Thursday night I found myself with a lovely pint of local ale at a bar in Milwaukee, talking to Robin who was behind the bar. I was waiting to meet Robert and the Subhumans, who were flying from London that night. They landed in Chicago during a severe thunderstorm, Robert picked them up from the airport, and they drove that night through the flooded city and then off to Milwaukee.

Friday, the Subs played the Miramar Theatre, after a day of getting strings and drumsticks, getting gear together, and last preparations for tour. Tonight in Minneapolis is their second show, and we have over four weeks and thirty shows ahead of us.

Goddamn. What a fucking week.

My official job on this tour is to take care of the merch table, selling Subhumans t-shirts and CDs, stickers and pins, patches and records, and answering silly questions like, "Do you have that on vinyl? Can I get that (insert item here) for free?" My unofficial jobs include drinking the band beer, asking Robert a hundred silly questions while he's driving, like, "Where the hell are we?" flirting with MB, sleeping in the loft, and looking out the window while I write deep, insightful things in my journal, looking for more words to describe flat land, clouds, sky, and grass.

As promised last month, here are a few

odd segments pulled out of my scrapbook, a few days taken at random, a few good memories from the road.

Sunday, August 26. Minneapolis. Red Wine on the Floor.

Driving from Minneapolis to Omaha, headed south into the heartland.

At a truck stop, I catch a semi turning around in the large gravel lot, the strong wind sweeping across the open fields, picking up the dust raised by the truck's tires, a swirling cloud in its wake. Three motorcycles pass by on the adjoining highway, the sound of engines and wind. The fields surround us, open in all directions, no other buildings for miles.

I enjoying being here, taking it all in, my first time traveling in the States in years.

Last night the show was at the Triple Rock in Minneapolis, and it at first it felt odd not being there with my band, missing all the old crew. But after the show was over, there were sweet margaritas with MB, smoking rolled cigarettes outside with Dick, listening to absurdist drunken conversation, and talking with Nicole and Genene about Witch Hunt, their tours over the past year, and catching up.

That night, we all stayed in the old Profane house, drinking Carrie's wine, watching Andre break glasses, a red flood suddenly covering the floor. Not a bad beginning.

Saturday, September 1. Nightmare Motel.

Route 5 South, driving through the agricultural valley of northern California towards San Francisco. Neon green fields of young grass sit in the sun, and the valley stretches flat into the haze of mountains on the horizon. It is hot today, another long drive.

Last night, the show in Portland was brutally hot and the place was packed with sweaty punks. I was lucky to have a small merch booth where I could set up the t-shirts and CDs, protected from the wasted crowd.

The place was so packed that people were everywhere, standing on booths at the back of the bar, crushed in together up front, falling into the tables. By the end, Witch Hunt's table was wiped out, pushed up against the wall, and punks were standing and sitting on it, trying to see the stage.

The Subs set was fun; there was a massive circle pit larger than my apartment. I stood on my stool and watched the whole scene, singing along to myself, melting in the heat. At the end of the show the table was packed and busy. I slung t-shirts and CDs and gave out stickers, and afterwards I felt dazed, packing up the boxes and heading out to the van.

After a beer and a couple of shots, and a smoke outside, cooling off, we had to get on the road again. It was already 1 a.m., but SF was ten hours away, so we needed to cover some 100 miles tonight. Also, the Bay Bridge was closed for the weekend, we expected massive traffic, and at the very least, it would take an extra hour to get into the city.

So off we go into the van again.

MB sat up front, Robert drove as always, and I sat in the back but kept peaking my head up to the front between the seats, listening to their conversation about tour, smiling at MB and feeling good.

Dick, Trotsky, and Bruce were sitting in the back of the van, making jokes that made us all laugh, Bruce stood up and starting dusting everything in the van with a rag, proclaiming, "Excuse me, dusting! Dust the drummer, dust the bag of chips, dust the bear claw that has been sitting here for a week, dust the water bottles on the floor…"

After a couple of hours on the road, we soon discovered that with the Memorial Day weekend travelers, there were no vacancies to be found in the cheap motels, anywhere. Robert called every place he could think of, doing a Google search through his phone, and Witch Hunt, who was traveling behind us in their van, did the same.

After stopping at five different motels on the side of the highway, around 5 a.m. we finally found a vacancy. It was an interesting place—by far the scariest motel I've ever been to, reminding me of the Bates Motel, except not so scenic or comfortable. The place was more redneck than motherly, more Hell's Angels-on-the-run than an angry old woman in a rocking chair.

There was a row of rooms all facing the courtyard, a driveway with a few old wooden picnic tables on the grass, the interstate lanes about forty feet away. On one of the tables I found a small metal sculpture of what seemed to be a long bullet attached to something else, bolted to the table. Odd.

Even at this late hour, almost dawn, a man was out in the yard, and came up to Nicole, asking her if she wanted to see his collection of stones, laid out in the yard in circles. I can't remember if she said yes or no, but the look on her face as she told us about it wasn't pleasant. It was all creepy as hell.

But we all desperately needed somewhere to rest for a few hours, not everyone could fit in the vans to sleep, there were too many people, and the place was cheap, so we decided to stay. Isn't this how most bad horror movies begin?

A man in his boxers and no shirt came out of the trailer home with the wooden sign that said "office" and said he could give us a room for $40. Robert handed him two twenty-dollar bills; the man gave us a key and pointed to a door. No paperwork, no signatures. I didn't want to think about what had gone on in the room before us. It was sinister, evoking images of old gunpowder, a dirty used condom, bags of bad drugs, lines on wasted faces, burned out people with nowhere else to go. Mold covered the ceiling, and rusty nails kept the sink together.

Four people slept on the two beds, two people camped out on the floor, and each van was filled with three people each. We woke up early, with about four hours of sleep, but it was enough that the people driving felt OK enough to get back on the road. Nightmares greeted me, a demon under my skin. Everyone else in the motel room also said they had bad dreams; it was eerie. We packed up quickly, damn happy to be back in the van, back on the road!

Sunday, September 2. I Saw Jello in San Francisco.

Today was a different story all together. That's how it goes on tour, one day is different from the next, it's all a roll of the dice, sometimes you lose and sometimes you score. This port of call was the comfort of Kamala's apartment in Berkeley, a definite win.

I woke up with a clean pillow under my head, lying on Kamala's living room floor, a blanket and sleeping bag around me, the bright morning sun streaming through the glass door of her porch, MB still asleep next to me.

We had coffee and showers, and Kamala made an amazing breakfast of pancakes, tofu scramble, fake sausage, and fruit salad. After days of eating hash browns and toast at roadside diners, bananas from gas stations, pizza with no cheese, and the odd piece of vegetable that came my way, I was in vegan seventh heaven!

For once we didn't have a long drive, as it was only a few hours to Sacramento, and

the morning was relaxed and easy. MB and Robert watched football (soccer, that is), Bruce went for a walk, Trotsky called home, and Dick caught up on emails. I talked to Kamala about being a punk in SF in the '90s, how vibrant the scene felt to her back then, and heard tales from her bands Cringer and the Gr'ups. It was nice, having a break from all the long drives, if even for a day, able to take the time to hang out before we left for the next show.

Yesterday, after waking up at the Nightmare Motel, we made our way to San Francisco, finally crossing the Golden Gate Bridge in the early evening. Lying in the loft next to MB, looking out from the van's sunroof, the sky was a dark blue and I watched the deep red blur of the support cables pass overhead. I thought of some of my favorite SF moments, biking over this bridge and looking out to sea.

After four months away, I had returned to the city with the Subhumans, something I wouldn't have guessed at the beginning of my trip, back in April. My adventures continue to unfold, and sometimes I am amazed, wondering how I got here.

The traffic wasn't as bad as we expected, and we soon unloaded in the alley behind Slim's, a club in the city. I had my own booth again for the merch stall, and hung t-shirts on the wall behind me. I wasn't even that far from the stage, so I had a great view and a place to put my drink—not bad at all.

At Slim's, Bryce came to the show, along with Jay and Ramsey, and Chris from *MRR*, and Zeek was there, proudly wearing his Jack's patch on his jean jacket. It was nice to see familiar friends and faces. The most surprising thing was to see circle-pit Pat from Boston there! It was the first show Peligro Social played with the Subs on tour, and they kicked ass as usual. Witch Hunt had a good set, and the Subs were in fine form. It was definitely one of my favorite shows as the vibe was good, the sound was nice, and everyone seemed to be having fun.

Afterwards, the bands and bar staff, random people, friends and punks were hanging out after the place was closed. I packed up my boxes, helped load up the van and went backstage to see if there was any beer left for the roadies. I was surprised to see Jello Biafra sitting on a couch in the back room, going on about something. Hosts of people were around him, so I decided not to be another fan, introducing myself, and went out for a smoke instead. Ah, another day on the road!

Tuesday, September 4. Glitter and Glitz, Let's Bomb Hollywood.

We arrive in LA, and drive down Hollywood Blvd. to the club.

There are all the outlandish signs and tourist traps you can imagine; it looks like Disneyland on speed. The Knitting Factory is huge, an entire complex, and we load in through the back door. You go from the loading dock, down a long hallway, into the club itself.

Within an hour the place is packed, and once again I'm lucky to have a small spot behind the merch table, as everyone is crushed up front; there is hardly any room to move. Peligro Social played a good set, and the sound at the club reminded me of CBGBs, with a medium-sized stage and a great house sound system. Witch Hunt played their usual right-on set, and then the Subs went on. The crowd was excited, there was a roar when then they got onstage, and the energy was high. The set was fun, and I danced behind the stall with Bridge, making funny '80s moves and having a good time.

After their set, there was a crazy hectic rush at the stall, and Robert helped out, fending off the hundred punks screaming at us at once. At the end, the bouncers kicked the last of the drunk punks out, I had a smoke outside, and then packed up the boxes. MB came over, a Jack and cola in hand, smiling, bringing lots of hugs. Another show down!

This is when I remembered I was in Hollywood, and things got really strange.

One of Jay's friends operates a limo service, and kindly offered to take us all down the street to the bar. It was a laugh! Totally ridiculous on all accounts, my first limo ride, with anarcho-punk legends the Subhumans. We didn't know what to do but go ahead, take lots of dodgy photos, laugh and curse and get inside the white stretch limo that waited for us outside the club. We rode down the Boulevard, only a few blocks, hardly enough time to enjoy the three television screens or the bar, or stick our heads out the sunroof.

We arrived at a bar, operating after-hours, guests only. We were waved pass the security standing outside, a red velvet rope was opened and we went inside into a plush large bar. It seemed to be the height of LA punk scenesters, very strange and surreal.

Two punk DJs played a good set of music, the place was dim, and a disco ball twirled overhead. We all bought a stiff drink, talked to the few people we knew, and enjoyed the weirdness of it all.

Robert, who had parked the van nearby, walked in on this scene about an hour later. Dick was laying on the floor listening to Metallica, being picked up by two bouncers (who said you're not allowed to sit on the floor), everyone was wasted, and MB and I were making out on a leather couch in the corner. What a ridiculous sight, disco ball and all. Ah, good times!

Luckily, being of sound mind and one of the best roadies in the world, within ten minutes Robert had rounded us up, got us all in the van, and got us the hell out of Hollywood!

Friday, September 7. Desert.

Time has shifted; we have followed the road down the coast to San Diego. Now we are headed east, towards Tempe, the desert sun setting at our backs. As the sun begins to set and the heat subsides, the shadow of the van creeps longer on the road in front of us. There are no houses, no buildings, no side roads, only the interstate winds on and on into the horizon.

We spent the day driving through the desert, surrounded by vast stretches of rock. It was over 101 degrees outside, but we cruised along at 70 miles an hour in the relative comfort of our modern machine of steel and rubber, its heart of pistons and diesel galloping on and on through the miles, Robert at the helm.

At a lonely gas stop, we had to walk across the parking lot to another gas station, as the small shop where we bought gas had cardboard signs on the bathrooms saying "no water."

Walking across the asphalt, wearing my flip-flops and sunglasses, the breeze blew straight from a door to hell. The heat was all consuming, brutal and oppressive, almost frightening, an open sauna under the sun. I imagined people crossing the desert on foot or horseback, the amount of strength and knowledge needed to survive.

Once into Arizona, the desert became greener. Cacti stood tall and massive, pillars of life in this harsh climate. Desert bushes with long green stems instead of leaves, narrow fingers from willowy stalks, stand waving on the side of the road. The sand dunes are dotted with dark red, low bushes, and in the distance there are mountains, brown and blue, massive piles of rock, devoid of trees or green.

This is open land, it makes my mind wander, and I remember I'm a long way from home.

Monday, September 10. The Terrible Show that was Really Fun.

Driving through Texas, from El Paso to Dallas. The plains stretch on as far as I can see, bright green and yellow ground cover, low plants, dotted with darker green woody shrubs. Small oil pumps slowly bob their heads up and down, steel horses on the money trail, machines set on automatic, steadily riding along.

Last night the Subs played El Paso, a small town by the Mexican border. From the highway at night, we could see the lights of Juarez across the Rio. The Texas punks had warned us yesterday that a promoter well known for ripping off bands and being an all-around asshole ran this club. At this point there was nothing we could do but go and hope for the best.

The show itself was in a large room, bigger than my mom's house, probably used most often for disco dancing, judging from all the lights and the odd cages off to one side. At one end of the room was a large stage, and at the other end there was a bar, and a collection of tables and stools. I set up in the back, near the bar, where the club staff had given us a few tables for the bands.

The first band was terrible, probably the worst of tour. One of their songs kept repeating in the chorus, "He's a fag…" and I kept hoping it was a joke, or there was some point, or maybe they were queer, but in the end, it seemed they were just idiots who had managed to get their band on the show.

The show got even worse, when Witch Hunt went on stage and as Nicole was talking, she was heckled by a skinhead in the audience: "Why don't you stop complaining? Take it all off! Take it off!" The kids in the crowd didn't want to start a fight with the large bonehead, and later, we didn't either, as he was there with other large skinheads milling around, so the idiot stayed for the whole show, and no one told him off. Lame.

None of us by then were excited to be there, and just wanted to get the hell out of El Paso. But MB came by the stall, we sat at one of the cocktail tables in front of the table drinking Jack and colas, selling the odd t-shirt or sticker, and watched the Krum Bums, who so impressed me with their high energy and enthusiasm.

The Krum Bums play street punk that isn't cliché, which is hard to do. They are right on with the things they have to say on stage, sincere and still having fun, and their music is fast and furious. I'm wearing their t-shirt right now as I write this. So, get their record already, geez!

The Subs went on, and David and I talked behind the table, him telling me about El Paso punks, how he's looking forward to playing Austin, how excited they are to be on tour with the Subhumans for a few days. David is the type of person who I instantly like, the complete extravert who tells stories, makes jokes, has too much energy and jumps around being silly, who is super friendly and welcoming to just about everyone. The first time I met him, he dove through a table of empty beer bottles onto the floor, just his way of saying hello. Punk fucking rock.

The stall was very slow, it was a small show, and there wasn't much for me to do except stand there to make sure things didn't get stolen. So, when the Krum Bums offered to smoke me out, I said "hell yeah," and Bridge was kind enough to watch the stall for a few minutes as I went out to the parking lot.

I don't smoke pot all the time, but every once in a while it's really nice, and I hadn't been stoned in quite some time. Ever since a fucking state trooper in Virginia caught me with a quarter ounce of weed, I make it a point not to travel with contraband. It's just too easy for cops to search you for no good reason at all.

So, a quick smoke in their van, laughing at the fake pigeons they have riding on their roof, then running back to the show. The table was still dead by the last part of the Subs set, so I left Bridge to watch it one more time, and went up front.

I was stoned, the music was loud but not deafening, and the place was big enough that I could easily make my way up front to the stage. The band sounded really on, the two weeks of solid shows making them really together and tight, the music kicked ass—and I remembered why I like the Subs so much as a band, how they are so great to see live. It was one of my favorite moments of tour, and I couldn't stop smiling.

For two weeks straight I had been trapped behind the stall, and now, at least for a few songs anyway, I was just another punk at the show. I almost didn't know what to do. Then I remembered what I've always loved to do at shows.

I danced and sang along with everyone else up front. I loved the punks with the homemade Subs t-shirts, and the two young girls in front of me, probably 15 or so, dancing in the pit, arms locked together smiling to themselves. The sound of bass, drums and guitar marching on carried me in the music, Dick was fully into the thick of it, and the circle pit rushed around.

After the show, the promoter earned his reputation. When Robert asked for the Subs money at the end of the night, the guy gave him some of the money promised, but not all of it. When Robert tried to talk to him about his obligation, the guy replied, with all of his large security goons standing around in the office, "Shut up and get the hell out of town." So, with the better part of valor, we did just that.

Despite all of the drama about the promoter, the band was in a good mood, and Bruce, MB and I, sitting in the back of the van, decided to celebrate leaving El Paso with tequila cocktail on the road. It was very civilized. We had a fine bottle of tequila someone had given them under the seat, and bought a bag of ice and a bottle of Sprite from a gas station down the road. We drank from plastic cups, sitting in the dark, and it was a nice way end to the day. It was raining, making the van cool, the sound of raindrops hitting metal.

Once again, Robert was a driving champion, as we needed to make some miles towards Dallas. I woke up in the loft to lightening, a full storm on top of us, the windshield full of rain. At 4 a.m. we pulled into another cheap motel, everyone tired and spilling out into the night. Before going to sleep, we stood on the motel balcony, looking at the sky, the storm off in another direction, dark clouds on the horizon, the energy still in the air.

Today, as I write this, sitting in the van again, the sky is clear. I think I will describe the landscape as, "painted fluffy clouds above light green shrub."

The road carries us on straight and flat, and we roll onwards into Texas.

"We live we die / in fear of gods and guns / and never knowing why / why must we someday die? / So live your life / in fear of no one / we must have our say / before we fade away."

End Notes.

It feels like I have been to the end of the earth and back again, a sailor returning back to port.

I am a bit dazed. I have a bed, but at night wrap my sleeping bag around me, a familiar comfort. My backpack lies half-full on the floor, it doesn't seem right to put it away, to get too settled. Tonight will be my fourth night back in San Francisco after five months of being on the road. It has been good to see friends, to walk around visiting my old haunts in the Mission, thrift stores and graffiti-covered

alleys, coffee shops and book stores, the best cheap tacos in the world.

Now, living in Oakland, I've spent the last three mornings peering out into my new neighborhood, walking until my legs were tired down unfamiliar streets, enjoying the sun on my face, the luxury of having time to myself, no schedule to keep but my own. I need to think about plans, a job, practical things, but that can wait a few more days. I want to fully enjoy being here.

I tried to summarize, to think of what I can tell you this month, but the words escaped me. I need time to process everything, to let it all sink in. Instead of a single grand story, something that is neatly packaged into column format, I wrote what I could at the moment, a few images that stand out in my head, a few pages torn from my yellow tattered journal, a few days and thoughts from the past month on the road. I know it misses some deep meaning about punk or life, some grand overview.

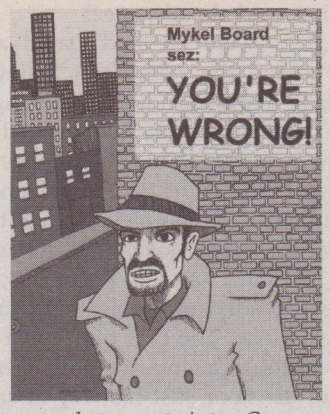
But maybe that's life on the road. Every day is different. Sometimes you roll the dice and things work out. Sometimes they don't. For me, the best part about tour are the people I meet, the late-night conversations, the bands on stage, and seeing places I would never have had the opportunity otherwise. This was a good one, and thanks so much to the Subhumans and Robert for having me along. Special thanks for MB for all the good times. It was a blast! Hell yeah!

One Last Thing: Bands to Listen To.

One really great part about the Subhumans tour was that they always traveled with good bands from the DIY scene. On this tour, it was Witch Hunt, Peligro Social, MDC, Toxic Narcotic, the Krum Bums, and World Inferno Friendship Society, each doing part of the tour. There were also many awesome bands that played shows in their hometowns, including Iron Lung in Seattle, Caustic Christ in Pittsburgh, Bruise Violet in LA, and many more I have forgotten in the blur of things. Bruise Violet were wonderful to see at the Knitting Factory in LA on the second day, and I still wear the homemade necklace I bought from their stall.

Cheers to all the bands, all the great people I saw along the way!

Erika, the Drinking Pirate Roadie (e_bitch-crew@yahoo.com)



So the prophet went into Gomorrah and preached to the people. He screamed to warn them that they have to repent and stop their evil ways or they'd be destroyed. The people didn't listen, but the man continued to walk through town screaming his warnings.

After several days, a little boy came up to the man.

"Why are you still shouting?" he asked. "Don't you see that you can't change anyone?"

"I used to scream to try to change humanity," said the man. "Now I realize that's impossible. So now, I scream to keep humanity from changing me." —Elie Wiesel

I'm madder than a pedophile at a nursing home. It's my stop. I struggle up from my subway seat, putting my *Razorcake* in my bag and wiping the bagel crumbs from my pocket. I reach the door, and there's this massive hunk of blubber trying to force his way in.

"What the fuck? Dija go ta retard school? Let people *out* first, you fuckin' ape."

I don't say any of that, of course. This guy is six-foot-tall and weighs three of me. He could crush me with a flick of his index finger. But I think it. And I think it hard. I hate people who block the subway doors. Kill 'em.

It bothers me until I get to work. It keeps coming back. The I-shudda-saids and What-could-he-have-done-to-me?s. I spend much more time on this guy's stupidity than it's worth. But that's what pet peeves are all about. Getting worked up over stuff that isn't worth getting so worked up about.

They're weird, these pet peeves. It's logical to get mad at George Bush for the murder of so many people in Iraq. It's not logical to get mad at the old lady who stands blocking up the walk side of the escalator. But logic is not part of pet peeve. It's a deep emotional immediate feeling. Fuck logic.

On the way back home, I'm trying to walk up Lexington Avenue to get to Grand Central. Ahead of me is some tourist family, lazily walking down the sidewalk. Asses like twin watermelons. This is probably the first time they've walked since they got into their new pick-up truck in Omaha. Shoulder to shoulder. Taking up the whole sidewalk. Not letting a single person pass this way or that. Jeezus fuck! Go back to Nebraska! I hate people who take up the whole sidewalk. Kill 'em!

And then there're people with sandals. At a punk show? If I want to see your toes, I'll ask if I can suck them. This is punk rock. This is army boots or Docs or cop shoes or most anything not Nike or so hippie it inspires that foot I want to shove up their asses.

Sandals? Unless you're an Arab belly dancer with a jewel in your naval, you should not be wearing sandals. Fuck sandal-wearers. I wanna kill 'em!

So I walk back from ABC NO RIO and I see this guy in a black leather jacket. Between him and a mailbox is this ugly girl. White skin, little white blouse, tied in a bow under her tits. She's leaned back against the mailbox. He's pressing her into the blue, his entire body leaned against her, like she's a piece of dough being flattened for a pizza. His lips press against hers. Her arms feebly wrap around his back. His hips press tightly into her. Grinding.

Dammit, jerk. I'm the first in favor of screwing, but this isn't screwing. This is a show. You wanna prove to the world you're getting laid? OK, hand out cards. Wear an I'm Getting Laid button. Write a letter to *MRR*. This guy's worse that those jerks who talk about their private life on a cell phone in the bus.

Listen, Buster, keep your public displays of affection to yourself. I'm not impressed. You disgust me. You're so insecure about your sex life that you need to show it to the world. Wassamatter? Afraid we'll think you're a homo? Need to prove yourself? You're only proving how pitiful you are. I should kill you.

Every time I heard US troops are mowed down in Iraqi, a little shiver of joy went up my spine.

"Yeah!" I would say to myself. "The bastards are getting what they deserve. I wanna see more. Georgie Bush is getting his ass kicked...and here's another one."

It was like pro-wrestling. The good guys score a point! The bad guy's down! He's out.

Rarely has there been a war where the division between the good guys and the bad guys is so clear. There are the invaders and the invaded. The attackers and those defending. It's as clear as a chancre.

Every day, I'd check the NY Times report. Watch the rising graph of American troops Killed, and cheer on Iraqi victories. I hate those fucking American murderers. Kill 'em!

Saddam Hussein was my hero. He was the Abraham Lincoln of Iraq, the only man who could bring together the warring sides and actually rule. While he was president, the Sunnis and the Shiites lived and worked together. Iraqi women were freed from the burqa and gained more power than in nearly any other Islamic country. I admired Saddam for these things. But mostly, I admired him for having the balls to stand up to the US. His murder was a great loss.

Except for that, the war went well for me. Although US newspapers never showed war dead, the statistics were enough. As the numbers crawled to (and eventually passed) 3000, I cheered the power of David's slingshot against the techno-weapons of Goliath. Go David! Kill 'em.

So I'm visiting my pal Stephie in Connecticut. I've known her for years. We used to work at The Scribner Bookstore in New York. In the 1970s, that was the bookshop for the hoity toidy. Norman Mailer shopped there. Lillian Hellman too. I was impressed by the clientele. I lusted after Stephie.

As usual, things don't work out. Stephie got hitched, rehitched, dropped some puppies, became a poet of some note, and moved to Connecticut. I macheted a different path through life's jungle. As happens, we got in contact again and I visited her in West Hartford.

It's a modest suburban home. Stone foundation, pale blue siding. A shed sits off to the side, and a large driveway sweeps up to the two-car garage. I pull my rental into the driveway, get out and ring the doorbell. In a few seconds, the door opens.

"Yeah?" he asks... not aggressively, just surprised.

"I'm an old friend of... er.. .your.. .er.. .mom?" I say, figuring that's the most likely relationship.

The kid is big. Six-foot-something, with shoulders wider than most doorways. He's built like a football player, but his face shows an intelligence not usually associated with the NFL.

"Are you Mykel Board?" he asks.

I nod.

"My mom told me all about you. I'm Tristan," he says.

We shake hands.

Suddenly, I remember. Tristan took off for the army. Despite Stephie's wishes, he said he loved helicopters, wanted to be a pilot...or a teacher...and needed a boost from the military. He enlisted and they shipped him to Iraq.

"What are you doing home?" I ask him. "Did you get out?"

He laughs.

"I'm on leave," he says. "I go back next week. They keep extending and extending. Tour after tour. You can never get out... Wanna Coke?"

"Got any beer?" I ask him.

He laughs, disappears into the kitchen and comes back with a pair of Coronas.

"Mom's out with the husband and the dog," he says. "They like to take long walks in the summer. Ya know. Mom's a poet. They do things with dogs and trees."

I nod, unconsciously staring at the guy. His perfect features. His wide forehead, like a scholar's. His nose, strong, yet not hooked or overbearing. His blond crewcut.

"So, what's it like over there?" I ask him.

"It's like hell," he says, using like like a 1960s teenager. "You read the reports, but the stuff you read about isn't the awful stuff. The awful stuff isn't big. It's like little. It's like we're not allowed into town. We can't talk to the local people. The base is like a jail. We have like a little radio station. We can download stuff on our iPods, but like our internet connection is really bad. And it's censored. We're like prisoners."

As he talks, I have to force my attention back to his words. I keep staring at his face. I see the left side of that wide forehead splatter onto the window behind him. His brain leaks out over the exposed skull. An eye dangles from the optic nerve. His lips, blown away, expose teeth fragments in what looks like a bubbling pit of red tar. His shattered mandible wags up and down as his strained breathing pushes out words.

"... and I just want to sit and like listen to my music and read a book. But you can never do that. You're always like on edge. Waiting to fly, waiting for...for...are you all right?" he asks me. "You don't look too good."

"No," I tell him, "I'm fine. I'm just spacing out a bit."

"OK," he says. "I'll leave you then. Mom should be home like soon."

"No," I say. "I want to hear more."

But I'm, like, not feeling too good.

ENDNOTES: [email subscribers (god@mykelboard.com) or website viewers (www.mykelboard.com) will get live links and a chance to email comment on the column]

—> Junkmail from hell dept: I got in the mail what I thought was an offer to subscribe to a history magazine. On the front of the card, it says "Become a Part of History."

Then I thought it was a science museum. Inside in big green letters: "Come for A Visit. Stay for An Eternity." Wrong again. The card is from Green-Wood Cemetery in Brooklyn.

—> Get a loadda that finger dept: *Bottom Line Health* magazine reports that children's scores on math and literacy tests are "linked" to the length of their index finger in relation to the ring finger. I did some research, and here's the scoop.

DISEASE: Longer ring finger: Heart disease. Autism and ADHD are also common.

SEXUAL ACTIVITY: Longer ring finger: Researchers at the University of Cheminitz, Germany, found men with long ring fingers had more sexual partners in the previous year and during their sexual careers.

MUSIC: Long ring finger: There was a University of Liverpool study of 54 members of a symphony orchestra. The study found almost all the members had "exceptionally long" ring fingers.

DEPRESSION: Equal Length: A study at the University of Alberta found men with ring and index fingers of similar length—more like women—were more prone to depression.

HOMOSEXUALITY: Equal Length: Scientists at the University of California found men and women with index and ring fingers of the same length were more likely to be homosexual

INTELLIGENCE: Equal Length: Research at Milan University showed men with index and ring fingers of similar length had better verbal skills and were more likely to get good grades.

—> There had to be a word for it dept: Sexsomnia. That is the word for sleep fuckers... well almost. The actual definition is "People who exhibit sexual behavior during sleep—fondling another person, masturbation, etc." I'm up for some etc. How 'bout you?

—> Vegetarians get smart(er) dept: A recent booklet put out by vegans urges members to tone down the shrillness in order to recruit more people to the cause. The booklet "Guide to Cruelty-Free Eating" says, among other things:

"It's important to remember that equating meat with honey will make the vegan case seem absurd to the average person."

They also urge members to lay off abortion and "other political or ethical issues" to avoid conflict with the potential convert.

—> Americans like it big dept: According to the *Smithsonian* magazine, in the 1960s the average chicken weighted about 3 1/2

pounds at slaughter. Today it's 4 1/2 pounds. The average cow was 1,011 pounds. Today it's 1,275 pounds.

Oh, yeah—people: in 1980 the average male was 168 lbs. Today 180. (I'm 130.) The average female was 142. Today she's 152.

My favorite statistic is about the *International Journal of Obesity*. It had 509 pages in 1993, its first year of publication. The latest issue has 2,322 pages. My guess is that the increase is mostly from ads for diet pills.

—> Invention of the year department: Mitch Altman, a San Francisco man, has invented a keychain accessory called TV-B-Gone. You can use it switch off any TV in a public place. It's small, discrete, and $25 including shipping. Order from tvbgone.com. Maybe I can get a free one for the publicity.

—> Oh, yeah—I hate Elie Wiesel. I think he's lost any integrity he might have had when he started. Now he's a cog in the holocaust exploitation machine. Throwing in holocaust, and Hitler, and anti-Semite when anyone criticizes Israel or any Jewish organization.

That said, I have to give the man credit. That quote at the beginning is not an exact one. It's from memory. It was in the prayer book at the local homogogue where I went for Yom Kippur. But even if I didn't remember it exactly, it's a good one.

—> What's for dinner, Mom? dept: In Belleville Missouri, K. Vickers was charged for "criminal neglect." Someone called the cops about "an injured woman." They came, and found that Ms Vickers was falling down drunk...not injured. They helped her to her apartment. Inside they found her mom. Dead. Her leg had been partially eaten by the family's poodle.

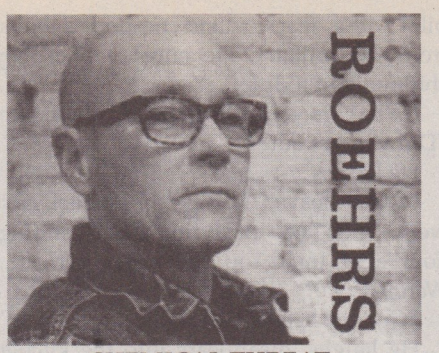
I wonder if the neglect charge was because of mom or the pooch.

—> Just the caption dept: Here's the caption of a photo published by The Getty News Service: "At a new rehabilitation facility at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Army Spc. Marco Robledo, aims an M4 rifle at a firearm training simulator as instructor Ross Colquhoun helps adjust Robledo's prosthetic arm."

'Nuff said?

—> Kyle Nonneman sent me clippings about Mom Eaten By Dog, and Walter Reed Hospital. I used them for these endnotes. Kyle's a jailbird in Missouri. He could use some letters, old fanzines, whatever you got. Write to him! He's: Kyle Nonneman, 68528_065, Medical Center for Federal Prisoners, POB 4000, Springfield MO 65801

Plus, you'll get tidbits from him like "Cannibalism is DIY as fuck, isn't it?"



CHEMICAL THREAT - WORLD WAR THREE

Fuck! 86 MENTALITY from Washington DC has crushed you skins and punks once again! Deranged Records has reduced the radio airwaves to cheap barnyard fodder! The brutality comes snaking off these grooves like Medusa's evil little sister. You lucky fucks who caught 86 MENTALITY on their west coast tour know that this is some of the most potent skinhead rock 'n' roll ever perpetrated on the people of the United States of America! Steve (vocals), Matt (guitar), Judycki (bass), and Jason (drums) show you skins and punks what northeastern rough and tumble hardcore is about! Read the lyrics on "Anti-Society," "Called Out," "Crash the Gates," or "Out of Control." 86 MENTALITY catches the urgency of life in these 50 states of freedom! The vocals bristle with trouble. This band will make the fucking hairs on the back of your neck stand up! You fucks should go with the momentum—86 MENTALITY will provide the soundtrack for viewing the imminent destruction of the human race. This futile situation could be described as a "life trap."

The 86 MENTALITY reality check smacks you in the face like the cold kiss of a fist. This lose-lose situation could be summarized in many different pessimistic terms. One song title that is particularly apropos is "Chemical Threat – World War Three." You peace punks can chew on that shit for a while!

Order the 86 MENTALITY *Final Exit* EP from Deranged Records, www.derangedrecords.com.

Fuck! Sick Thought Records has messed with your little mind this month! The DANNY GLOVER *Lethal Weapon* EP is some of the most unforgiving, bloodthirsty thrash ever dumped on you unsuspecting cretins! These deranged skate punks pummel you with sex-crazed, psychotic brutality! The unadorned, raw, blisters-on-your-ass punk DANNY GLOVER administers is beyond the point of no return. The demonic vocals are coupled with manic guitar playing, bomb-strike bass and drum attack. and a take-no-prisoners credo that spares no man!

These frantic songs boil over immediately! The music turns nasty before you catch your breath! You get fucking nailed to a piece of discarded timber real quick! DANNY GLOVER shows you the underside of the belly of the beast! The demented thrash starts with "Intro to Madness," which surges into the uneasiness of "Told Her Twice" and "Broads." Side "D" (one) reaches a diseased crescendo with the song "Sick of You." The side finishes with the punk masterpiece "Go Skate."

Side "G" (two) starts off with the fast, furious, satanic, "D.G.", the DANNY GLOVER anthem and proceeds immediately to the overtly cheerful song "Die." Song three, "Motherfucker" enters into the realm of the thrash messiah—open wounds, bleeding profusely, never healed! DANNY GLOVER kills you off with "Fake Destroyer" and "Dead Alert." This EP is one of the most troublesome inaccessible records made in a long time—there is no redeeming social value whatsoever! Get it now!

Fuck! Mr. Yannick has fucked your secure pop-punk world up! Your VICIOUS records can now be used as ashtrays! Feral Ward's new FY FAN release fucking tears the gonads off all that melodic safe-as-milk crap!!!

FY FAN takes the Swedish punk mayhem to the happy conclusion—no one gets out alive! All the lyrics are in their native tongue, but it doesn't fucking matter! This shit is as violent and untamed as anything you fucks will encounter! You get six songs of hardcore with the capital "H." This vile music offers no apologies to anyone! The collateral damage is immense. The band, the record label, the fans—all parties—show no remorse! Order the *Levande Lik* EP by FY FAN from Feral Ward Records.

CRIMINAL DAMAGE has a new album on the esteemed Feral Ward label! The lingering blast of the song "On Goes the Fight" from the first LP set expectations for CRIMINAL DAMAGE at an extremely high level. CRIMINAL DAMAGE comes close to matching the power of their debut! "Mudslinger" takes you to that rarified place! This is one fucking powerful tune! This kernel of greatness whets your appetite for more punk 'n' roll! Very few songs by any current punk band can capture the raw desperation of "The Power of Fools" from the first CRIMINAL DAMAGE LP. This LP falls just short of that goal. On side two of *No Solution*, CRIMINAL

DAMAGE shows their chops on "The Heat" and "Media Casualties." For a finale the punks pull off a minor coup with the title cut, "No Solution." If you had never heard the first LP, this effort would blow you away! The *No Solution* LP is completely solid and dripping with accomplished guitar hooks and taut vocals. Start with the first album. After you thoroughly digest the magnificent rock 'n' roll on that LP, progress to the expertly crafted punk LP *No Solution*.

Fuck yes! You lucky skinheads get a new Longshot Records release. It's called *We're Not Like You* and it's by Canada's ALTERNATE ACTION. You were treated to a strong Longshot Records split EP awhileback featuring ALTERNATE ACTION and Australia's MARCHING ORDERS. That great split set the stage for the current ALTERNATE ACTION offering. The Canadian skins come blasting off the turntable from the get go with the title cut, "We're Not Like You." Yes! Top-shelf working class Oi! is the currency here. ALTERNATE ACTION distances themselves from the wealthy losers in our society with a frigging boatload of venomous contempt. "Isn't it a bloody shame your life is so damn lame / You're rich, you're pompous...We weren't born with silver spoons and we don't choose to associate / We're not like you / We don't like you!" Fucking-A!

Song two continues with a proud skinhead anthem, "Nothing Changed." The men of ALTERNATE ACTION sing, "Not many choices to be had / Making do with what we've got / Strong morals and pride / With our dignity we walk in stride." These are deep-seated feelings from these blue-collar men.

Side two starts with the song "Never Again" lamenting the inadequacies of a system of justice that releases pedophiles back into society via halfway houses, in spite of statistics showing frighteningly high recidivism for this crime.

"Dead Society" finishes off this fine EP with a melodic flourish. This is an infectious skinhead EP that you must own! Contact Longshot Records at PMB #72, 302 Bedford Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11211, USA or www.longshotmusic.com.

HELLSHOCK from Portland, Oregon and AGE from Japan came to San Francisco and fucked every living thing up—fucked it up real hard!

These punk/metal Satan worshippers have reduced large continents to tears. The HELLSHOCK trip to Brazil reportedly changed the course of the Amazon River! AGE is a timeless Japanese treasure. STORMCROW and DOPE CHARGE got the crowd fucking fully wound up for the event!! The show included a couple of new HELLSHOCK tunes that absolutely kicked butt! Stay tuned as HELLSHOCK prepares to fuck up your city!

Until next month, see you fucks at the bar!

After six months of living at the Maxipad, I was fully aware that taking on the role of coordinator would be no walk in the park. Witnessing Chris burn through the night and into the daylight working on the magazine was as good an indication as any as to what I would be up against. As a reader and even as a fairly involved shitworker, you can't really grasp how much time is gobbled up by the details. Between the endless emails, spending six hours on and subsequently losing and having to redo a layout, following up with and collecting debts, prepping the next issue, along with maintaining another full-time job and dealing with all of the other drama that life pisses on me, this month has been one for the history books. All whining aside, it's quite an amazing honor and privilege to have this opportunity. It's a bit of a dream come true and I don't think it's quite sunk in yet. I'm really excited to get to work alongside Chris, who's one of the most driven and dedicated dudes I know, Cissie, whom I've known for most of my adult life, and Martin, who's always there (whether he knows it or not) to give me that kick in the ass I sometimes need. I also can't forget to give a shout-out to Tim Yo for making all of this possible, every last shitworker for (most of the time) making things easier, and Andy for being, well, Andy.

* * *

In order to help readers get to know a little more about me, here are some facts about who I am:

I still sleep with a stuffed animal "cat" (the reason I use quotes is due to the fact that he's degenerated into a germ-infested ball of stuffing and lives in my pillow) named Boo-Boo Kitty, that was my first material possession.

I love shitty TV and even shittier movies. Some favs include *The Hills*, *Laguna Beach*, *Mr. Deeds*, *Bring it on*, and *Joe Dirt*.

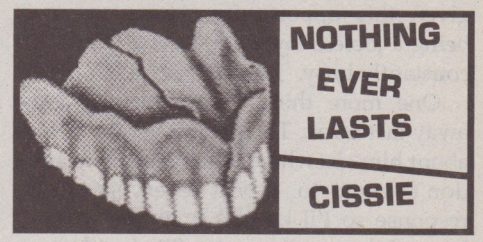
The first album I ever owned was the CAMEO cassette with the song "Word Up" on it and my first punk album was BLACK FLAG *First Four Years* on cassette. The first vinyl I ever got was JUDGE's *New York Crew* 7" and the most recent was the first ANTIOCH ARROW LP.

* * *

Last, but by no means least, I'd personally like to dedicate this issue to the memories of Lance Hahn for his lifetime of dedication to the Punxes, and Ben Chapman, a truly great dude who first introduced me to the likes of *Pick Your King*, and Japanese hardcore—you are forever in my heart and mind. "No mas Punkis Muertos!"

* * *

These things made this month not so dreadful: New EPs from ACTS OF SEDITION, AFTER THE BOMBS, and ECOLI, the entire recorded works of UNITED MUTATION, EUCHARIST LP, ARMIA *Legenda*, PULP *Different Class*, SACRILEGE *Behind the Realms of Madness*, BELLE AND SEBASTIAN *Boy With The Arab Strap*, EL BANDA LP, cheeseburgers (sorry, not veg), A. T. L., Newcastle, the Red Sox, super Soy-Rizo burritos, NIRVANA *Nevermind*, and true friends.

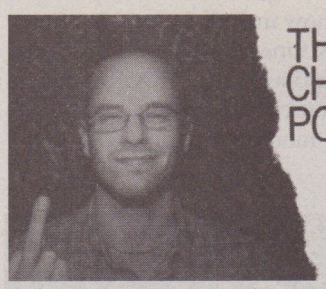


This summer has been especially long, at least by my interpretation of the season. Summer to me is distinguished by warm weather and a period of accelerated activity. I remember a week in March when the temperature peaked at 75 degrees everyday. I was living in Austin and I was about to go on a two-month trip to Chicago and Europe. I'm pretty sure that was the week my summer started this year and it has yet to end. Yesterday it was 75 degrees as I was walking around plotting out how to move all my belongings from an Austin storage space to my new residence in San Francisco. In short, for me this year has been characterized by exciting times and nice weather. I can't complain.

Some highlights include swimming in both the Mediterranean Sea and the other side of the Atlantic in April (!), seeing La Fraction and Peligro Social play on a boat in Austin (seriously you haven't lived 'til you've seen a punk show on a boat—I felt dead the first 30 years of my life until this event), eating burrito-sized crêpes with Logan across from the Eiffel Tower and getting covered in chocolate and powdered sugar, eating poutine with Scott and some Canucks in Montreal at five in the morning, moving to San Francisco with only one-week of notice. Yeah, I'm easy to please—food, shows, friends, water, travel, *fun times*...

Now, I find myself at *MRR* coordinatin' and writing a column and still having fun in my (possibly) never-ending summer. I've had an anxious time trying to figure out how to introduce myself to the readership. Well, here I am, one of the newbies. I guess it's time for y'all to adjust to this new use of space in the columns section. Personally, I'm excited to be here at the helm with Chris, Justin, and Martin. It's kinda hard knowing that Justin and I are filling Golnar's shoes. She was a great coordinator and really important to the magazine. I guess that's why two of us are attempting to replace her. Luckily, everyone that's involved with the magazine has been nice and the transition has been smooth. I've lived in San Francisco for two months. It's been a cool and informative experience thus far, and I'm grateful to be given this opportunity. After a year of being a jobless layabout, I can't wait to be constantly busy.

One more thing, Lance Hahn passed away last week. There are several writings about him elsewhere in the magazine and I don't want to repeat everyone else's response so I'll keep this simple. When I learned the news my eyes filled with tears. Over the past several years, Lance has been one of my favorite people to run into and chat with. We've crossed paths many times in Chicago and Austin and I've always enjoyed conversations with him. Lance was loaded with great stories of traveling in Japan, fighting Nazis outside the old *MRR* house, growing up punk in Hawaii, touring with Beck and hangin' with Sonic Youth, going to shows in SoCal during the mid-'80s, etc. He lived a remarkable life and had a knack for retelling his adventures. I'm super bummed that I will never have another conversation with Lance again. I have to echo Sean Forbes' sentiment and hope that Lance's anarcho punk histories will one day be collected and published into a book. His presence, in the punk world as I know it, will be greatly missed.



THREE CHORD POLITICS

chris hubbard

I never met Lance Hahn in person; I don't know why I didn't introduce myself to him the last time he was out here with J Church, as we had corresponded a fair bit over email. This was before the most recent wave of health problems forced him into the hospital, and I suppose I felt like there would be another opportunity just around the corner.

Lance was so incredibly prolific, one of those rare folks that seemingly couldn't help but produce—whether it was music, writing, or simply correspondence—at several times the rate of the normal person. It would be difficult to overstate his contribution to the punk scene, and to *Maximum Rocknroll* in particular. By sheer word-count alone, I would bet he has written more in *MRR* in the form of his articles on anarcho-punk than anyone else in my time at the magazine—and we still have at least two years' worth of unpublished pieces, including an enormous 30-page (!) history on the New York band Even Worse that I'm guessing he wrote in his spare time between documenting the UK scene. This is to say nothing about the warm, upbeat, and inspiring person I was lucky to get to know—even if just a little bit—through his letters, articles, zine, and music. RIP Lance.

* * *

I have one final bit of official news to announce: The following issue of *MRR* will be my last in the position of coordinator here at the magazine. However, in many ways my involvement in the magazine will stay the same. The main reason for this change (along with burn-out from my six months as sole coordinator) is due to the fact that the friend of the magazine who has been subletting the second apartment at the building *MRR* rents will be moving out, and we need someone to make up his share of the rent. Therefore, I'm planning on staying here at *Maximum*, upping my hours at my other job, and handing the reins of the magazine off into the capable hands of my new co-coordinators Cissie and Justin. I've no doubt they'll be more than able to maintain the high standurds one has come to expect from a publication such as *Maximum Rocknroll*...

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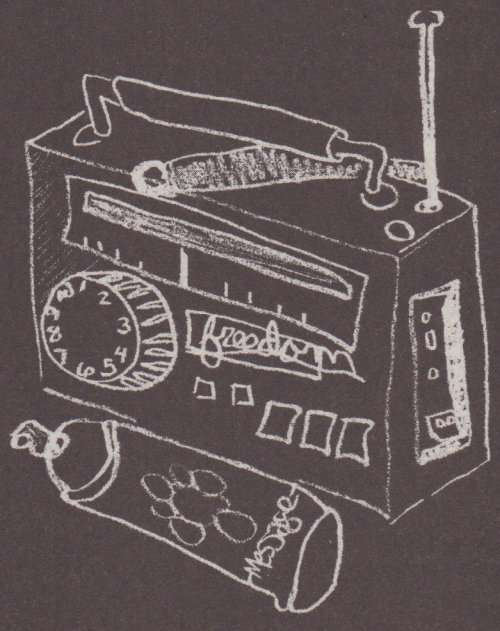
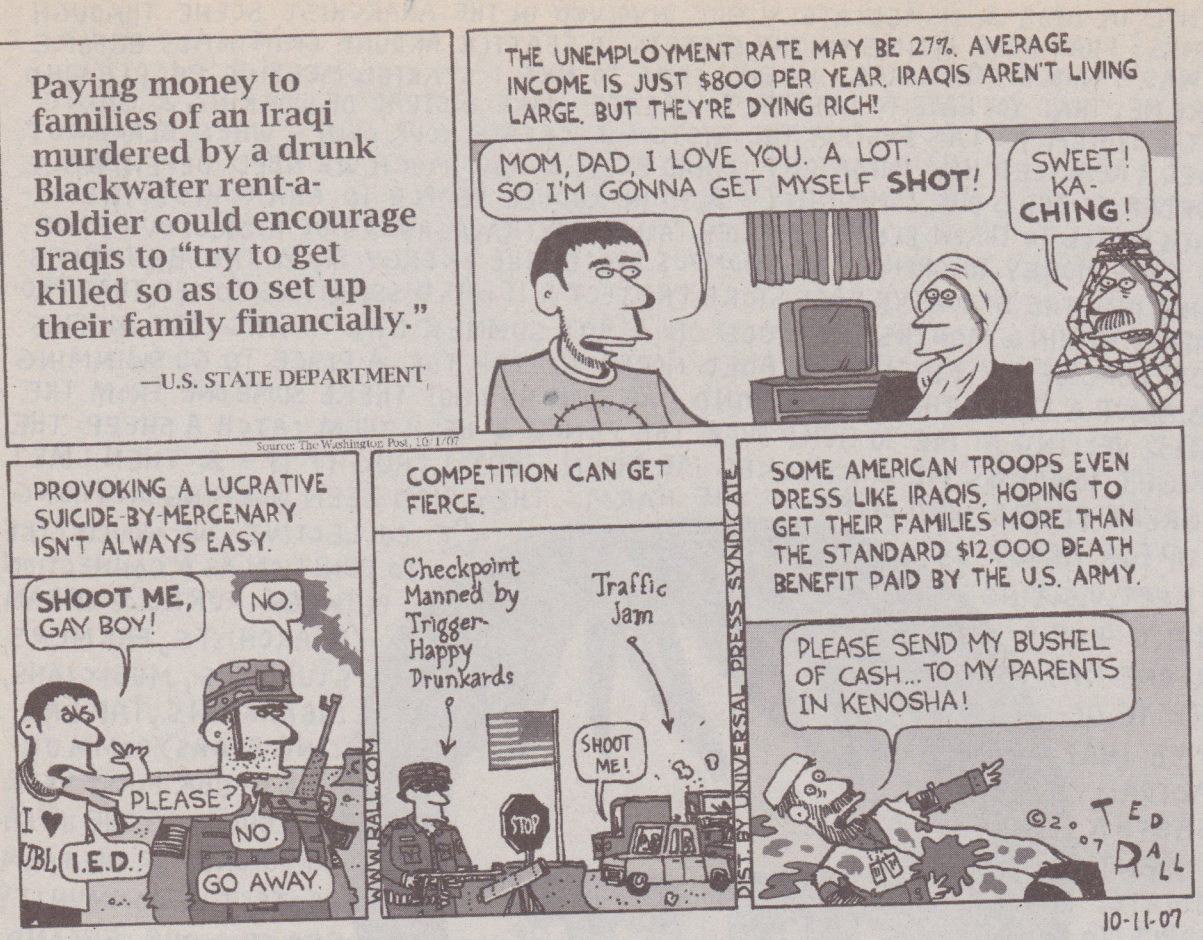


Paying money to families of an Iraqi murdered by a drunk Blackwater rent-a-soldier could encourage Iraqis to "try to get killed so as to set up their family financially."

—U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT

Source: The Washington Post, 10/1/07



10-11-07

10-13-07

PEOPS

I MOVED TO NYC IN 1999 & IMMEDIATELY GOT INVOLVED IN THE ANARCHIST SCENE THROUGH BLACKOUT BOOKS - I HAD BEEN LIVING ON THE STREETS IN SEATTLE AROUND CRIMINALS BEFORE THAT WHICH WAS A WHOLE OTHER LIFE - WHEN I CAME TO NYC I STARTED MEETING PEOPLE WHO BELIEVED, LIKE ME, THAT YOU HAVE TO DESTROY TO CREATE - LIKE INSTEAD OF WORKING & GOING ALONG WITH THE SYSTEM YOU CAN DESTROY THE SYSTEM & CREATE YOUR OWN - WHEN BLACKOUT BOOKS CLOSED I REALIZED HOW IMPORTANT IT HAD BEEN & HOW MUCH WE NEED DEPENDABLE SPACES IN ORDER TO BUILD OUR COMMUNITY - & TO INTRODUCE PEOPLE TO ANARCHIST IDEAS- I WORKED WITH PEOPLE TO THROW BENEFIT PARTIES CALLED "EXTRAVAGANZAS OF RIDICULOUS PROPORTIONS" TO RAISE MONEY TO OPEN AN AUTONOMOUS SPACE - THE ENERGY FROM THE BENEFITS ENDED UP GOING INTO THE BROOKLYN FREE STORE PROJECT & IT WAS DISSPIRITING TO SEE THAT PROJECT FALL APART WITHIN 6 MONTHS - IN 2005 ON A HOT SUMMER DAY IT WAS 105° IN THE CITY & A CARLOAD OF MY FRIENDS HEADED NORTH TO LOOK FOR A PLACE TO GO SWIMMING -WE'D HEARD ABOUT A FARM THAT HAD A POND - AS SOON AS I GOT THERE SOMEONE FROM THE FARM STARTED YELLING AT ME TO JUMP OVER THE FENCE & HELP THEM CATCH A SHEEP - THE RAM RAN RIGHT TOWARDS ME & KNOCKED ME DOWN - BUT I CAUGHT IT - & THEN I MET ALL THESE GREAT PEOPLE WHO LIVED ON THE FARM - THEY HAD BEEN WORKING ON FIXING THE PLACE UP FOR ABOUT 3 YEARS - I KEPT VISITING FOR THE NEXT 4 OR 5 MONTHS & ONE DAY IN NEW YORK IT OCCURRED TO ME THAT I COULD ACTUALLY LEAVE - SASCHA SCATTER SENT OUT AN EMAIL ASKING PEOPLE TO MOVE THERE TO KEEP HIM COMPANY OVER THE WINTER - HIM & THE GOATS - SO I MOVED IN THAT NOVEMBER (2K5) - OVER A HUGE THANKSGIVING FEAST WE MADE PLANS TO FORM THE GERMANTOWN COMMUNITY FARM - COLLECTIVE - WE WOULD LIKE TO FUNCTION AS A CONNECTION BETWEEN RURAL & URBAN (ANARCHISTS, FARMERS, STUDENTS, MUSICIANS, LIBRARIANS, TAP-DANCING BEARS) COMMUNITIES - OUR FIRST YEAR WAS BUILDING THE INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE FARM PROJECT & COMMUNITY SPACE - OUR SECOND YEAR WE ARE HOPING TO START OUR POPULAR EDUCATION PROGRAMS - I'M GOING AWAY FOR A WHILE TO HELP OUT IN NEW ORLEANS BUT I FIRMLY BELIEVE EVERY ONE SHOULD HAVE A FARM TO GO HOME TO - HERE FLY - EAT THIS CARROT - ITS GOOD FOR YOU!

BOBBY DANGEROUSLY - 12/03/2K6 - LOWER EAST SIDE NYC

I DID THIS PORTRAIT OF BOBBY D ALMOST A YEAR AGO - UNBELIEVABLE! - I FIRST MET HIM IN THE LATE '90S HANGING AROUND BLACKOUT BOOKS (I MISS THAT PLACE!) & ABC NO RIO & EVERYWHERE ELSE WHERE ACTIVISTS CONGLOMERATED - AT THE TIME HE HAD A DIFFERENT NAME - BOBBY D WAS INVOLVED IN THE ANARCHIST PUBLICATIONS AFTER THE FALL & SAW BLADE - I USED TO SEE HIM ALL THE TIME ZIPPING AROUND ON HIS BIKE - HE WAS (& MAYBE STILL IS?) ALSO A PART OF THE IN OUR HEARTS COLLECTIVE & HELPED TO RUN THE BROOKLYN FREE STORE - ALSO CONTRIBUTED TO FOOD NOT BOMBS & STENCIL STREET ART & HELPED TO ORGANIZE EXTRAVAGANTLY RIDICULOUS PARTIES - SO I HAVE NOT SEEN MR. DANGEROUSLY FOR A LONG TIME BUT I HOPE HE IS STILL HAPPILY FARMING - I JUST TALKED TO SASCHA SCATTER A FEW DAYS AGO & THEY WERE HAVING A HUGE PARTY ON THE FARM - TO GET MORE INFO GO TO GERMANTOWNCOMMUNITYFARM.BLOGSPOT.COM OR EMAIL TO BALDERDASH@RISEUP.NET

TO CONTACT FLY EMAIL FLY@BWAY.NET OR GO TO WWW.BWAY.NET/~FLY - DOG DAYZ ZINES #1 & #2 ARE AVAILABLE AT NEW DISCOUNT PRICES!! - ALSO PEOP (LE)S #3 - EMAIL FLY OR CHECK WWW.MICROCOSMPUBLISHING.COM FOR MORE INFO!! - PLEASE SEND ME SNAIL MAIL!! - FLY PO BOX 1318 COOPER STN NYC NY 10276 USA

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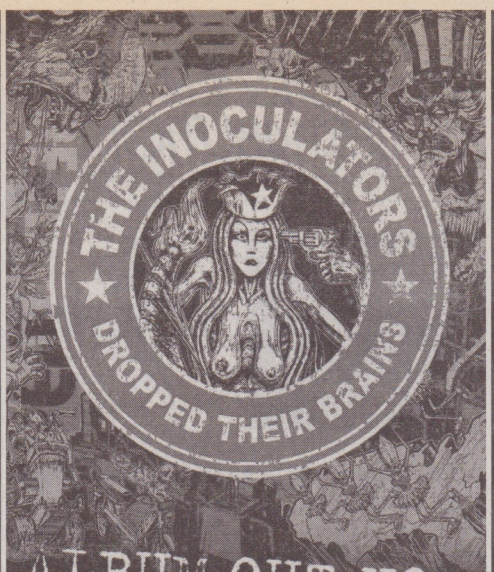

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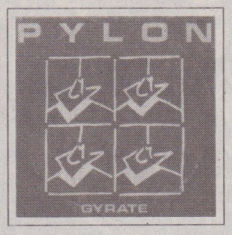

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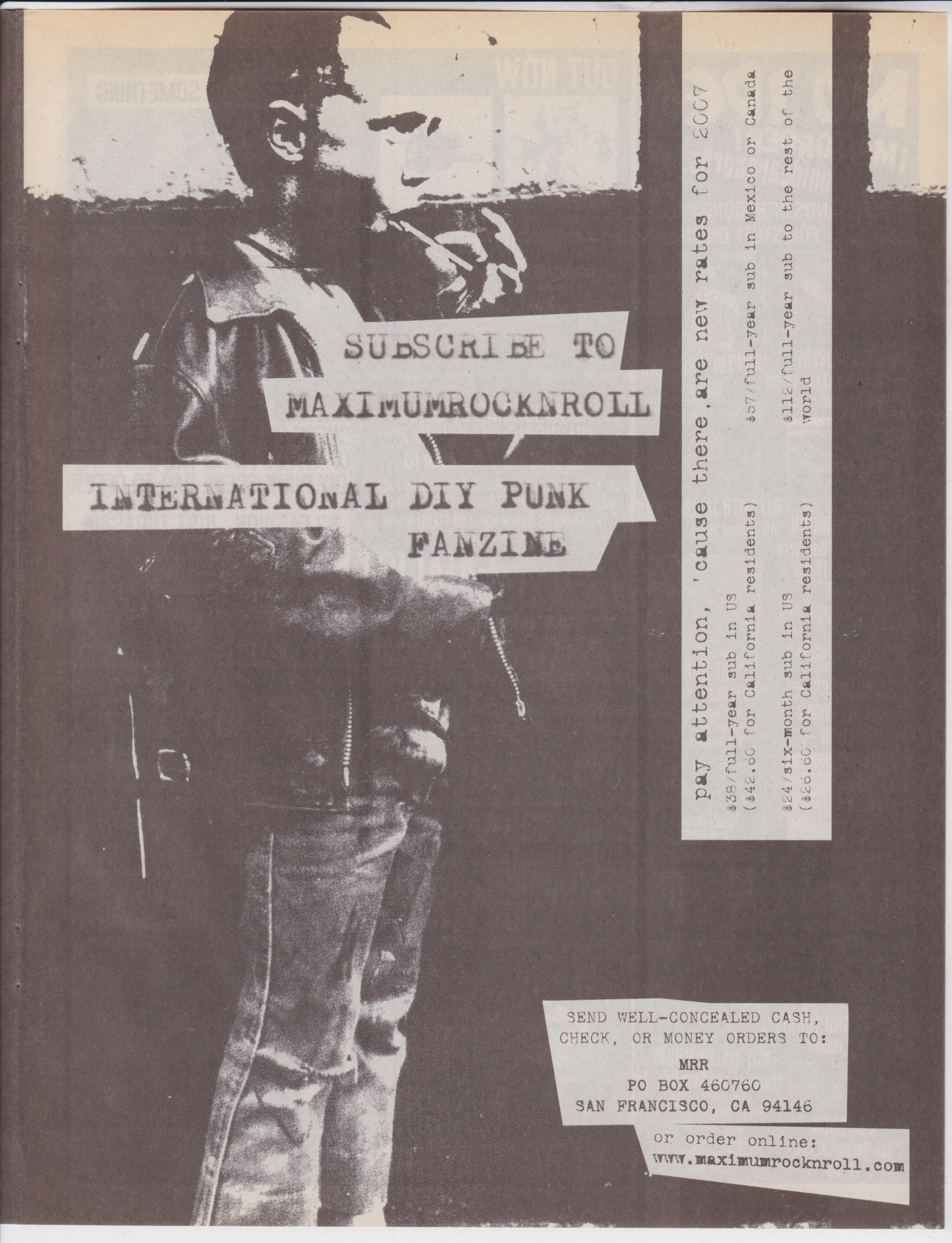
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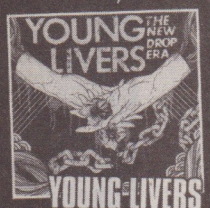

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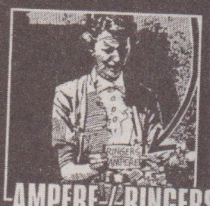

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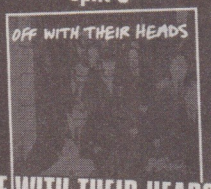

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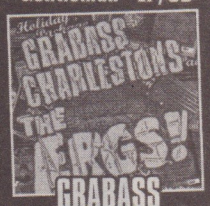

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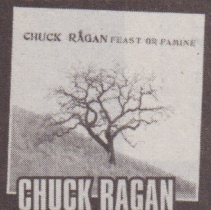

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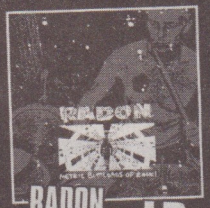

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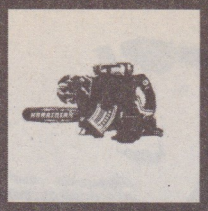

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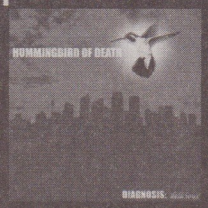

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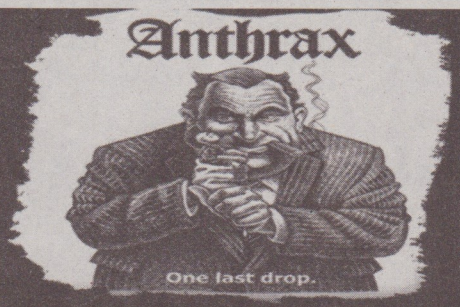

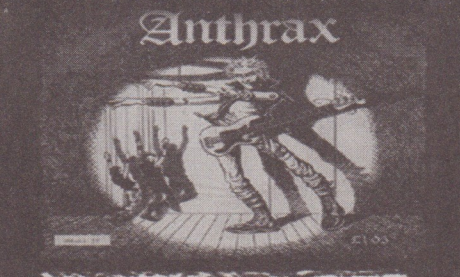

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JAPANESE HARDCORE GUITAR LEGEND CHELSEA FOUND DEAD

By Paintbox and Yas Devour

Chelsea died Aug.17 2007. He was the guitar player of Paint Box. Chelsea was the Hard Core genius. Listen to the music he created!! His body is gone but his music will be with us. He will be missed greatly.

LITTLE PROGRESS AT NATO MISSILE TALKS

By Paul Ames, *Associated Press*

Noordwijk, Netherlands—NATO has appeared to make little progress in narrowing differences with Russia over U.S. plans to install missile defenses in eastern Europe, even after the U.S. offered to delay activating the bases until there is proof of a threat from Iran. We cannot agree on what was offered to us, and are sticking to our position," Russian Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov told reporters after talks with his NATO counterparts. However, he said talks would continue. "It seems to me that the Americans are starting to better understand our concerns and we welcome that," Serdyukov said.

Underscoring the continuing tensions, two Russian strategic bombers neared the Dutch coastal resort where the ministers were meeting, on an unusual practice run that could be interpreted as a signal to NATO, the Norwegian military said. Lt. Col. John Espen Lien, a Norwegian military spokesman, said two Tu-160 strategic bombers, flew a highly unusual course near the Norwegian coast and between Britain and Denmark before turning back some 120 miles northwest of the Netherlands. "It could have been a coincidence, but there is also a chance that it was a signal," Lien told The Associated Press. Russia has routinely been sending bomber flights from its northern bases in recent months in what is broadly seen as a demonstration of its military power 16 years after the collapse of the Soviet Union left it with few resources. NATO officials in Noordwijk said the Russian planes remained in international airspace and were not considered threatening.

The meeting comes days after Defense Secretary Robert Gates said Washington may delay activating the proposed missile defense sites in Poland and the Czech Republic until it has "definitive proof" of a missile threat from Iran. The announcement was widely seen as an attempt to mollify Russian opposition to the U.S. plan. Moscow says Iran is decades away from developing missile technology that could threaten Europe or North America, and claims the U.S. bases will undermine Russia's own missile deterrent force. Russian President Putin last week said he detected "a certain transformation" in the U.S. view that allowed for continued dialogue.

The U.S. plan would install a radar base in the Czech Republic and 10 interceptor missiles in Poland. It is part of a wider missile shield involving defenses in California and Alaska which the United States says are to defend against any long-range missile attack from countries such as North Korea or Iran. French Defense Minister Herve Morin said European allies generally agreed with the Americans that there is a ballistic threat, "but not necessarily on the imminence of the threat." Piqued by the U.S. plans, Russia has frozen cooperation with NATO on a separate project to develop defenses against short-range battlefield missiles. Putin has also threatened to pull out of a Cold War-era treaty controlling conventional forces in Europe.

Morin urged the Netherlands and other nations fighting the Taliban to maintain their troop levels in front-line areas of Afghanistan. But he made clear during talks with other NATO defense ministers that his nation would not be sending combat troops to assist allies in Afghanistan's dangerous south. The Netherlands warned during the meeting's first day Wednesday that public pressure could force it to pull its 1,600 troops out of the frontline province of Uruzgan next year if they do not get more support from other allies.

That prospect has raised fears that one nation after another could pull its forces back. "The signal that a country gives by reducing its forces could be an extremely negative sign for the totality of the countries engaged in Afghanistan," Morin said. "I would say there is an extremely great risk of a domino effect." Morin said France would send a training unit to prepare Afghan army forces to help the Dutch and would continue to provide air support to NATO nations with troops in the south. But he said France would not be sending combat troops to the southern region. "For us it's instructors," he said.

Before the talks with Serdyukov, NATO ministers agreed on the need to scale down a new elite force because the deployment of thousands of soldiers to Afghanistan, the Balkans, the Middle East and Africa has left the 26 nations with too few combat forces to maintain the 25,000-strong unit meant as the spearhead of the allies' military modernization drive. NATO spokesman James Appathurai declined to say how small the new "core" force would be.

ARCHBISHOP APOLOGIZES FOR GIVING COMMUNION TO GAYS DRESSED AS NUNS

From an article in the *San Francisco Chronicle*

It was a typical Sunday Mass until two men in heavy makeup and nuns' habits received Holy Communion from San Francisco's top Catholic official. On Oct. 7, Archbishop George Niederauer delivered the Eucharist to members of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence—an activist group whose motto is "go forth and sin some more" —prompting cries of outrage from conservatives across the country and Catholics in San Francisco.

In response to a request for comment, Niederauer released a letter of apology addressed to "Catholics of the Archdiocese of San Francisco and to Catholics at large" in which he said he did not realize his mistake until after the Mass at Most Holy Redeemer Church in the Castro district. "At Communion time, toward the end of the line, two strangely dressed persons came to receive Communion," Niederauer wrote. "As I recall, one of them wore a large flowered hat or garland." Niederauer said that although he was familiar with the group because its actions had been condemned by his predecessors, he had never encountered any of the group's members until that Sunday. "These two people have long made a practice of mocking the Catholic Church in general and religious women in particular. Someone who dresses in a mock religious habit to attend Mass does so to make a point (that) was intended as a provocative gesture," he said in the letter, which will be published in this Friday's issue of Catholic San Francisco, a diocesan newspaper.

The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, founded in San Francisco in 1979, are known for their white face paint, outrageous costumes, theatrics and support of the gay community. They adopt names such as Sister Chastity Boner and Sister Constance Craving of the Holey Desire and have mottos such as, "It is not wise to say no to free drinks, cheap jewelry, discount cosmetics or pretty boys." Sister Barbi Mitzvah, who serves as "Board Chairnun" and "Sexytary," said Tuesday that the group is "not offering a comment. "These people are always after us," Sister Mitzvah said, referring to conservative pundits and Catholic leaders. The group did not identify the two members who took the wafers. One of the men, however, sent an e-mail to the church after the Mass and gave the name "Sister Delta Goodhand."

Conservative Fox news commentator Bill O'Reilly, who has disparaged "San Francisco values," called the latest flap another example of how the city is run by "far-left secular progressives who despise the military, traditional values and religion." On his Friday news show, O'Reilly called San Francisco "a disgrace on every level." San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom dismissed O'Reilly's comments. "This debate really is about San Francisco values. The Bill O'Reillys of the world are threatened by San Francisco because we value diversity, universal health care and civil rights for all. They will exploit any controversy to attack our values."

Some local Catholics, however, said they were hurt by what they said was a mockery of their most holy ritual. "It's been all the news in Catholic circles," said Bill May, chairman of the San Francisco-based Catholics for the Common Good. "Catholics are hurt, frustrated and a bit angry because nobody is standing up and saying this is not right. This is a desecration of the Eucharist. They were there to make a statement and embarrass the archbishop and, in doing so, they desecrated what is most sacred and dear to every Catholic in the world."

Holy Communion is a centuries-old tradition in which the celebrant receives from a priest the consecrated bread and wine representing the "Body of Christ" and the "Blood of Christ." It is to be taken reverentially, as it is considered the source of Christian life. "The general sacramental principle is that you don't deny the sacrament to someone who requests it," said the Rev. Jim Bretzke, professor of moral theology at University of San Francisco, a Jesuit Catholic university. "The second principle is that you cannot give communion to someone who has been excommunicated." He said such people are designated "manifest public sinners" in canon law. "This is someone who violates in a serious way one of the Ten Commandments or one of the important laws of the Church," he said. "While I can see Bill O'Reilly and others might be offended, the sisters do not meet the criteria the church has for denying Communion. Over-accessorizing and poor taste in makeup is not an excommunicable offense." Bretzke added, "Even if these people were bizarrely dressed, the archbishop was following clear pastoral and canonical principles in giving them Communion. The default is, you give Holy Communion to one who presents himself."

Matt Dorsey, who works in the city attorney's office and is a parishioner at Most Holy Redeemer, attended the Oct. 7 Mass. He said the service was held on the day of the Castro Street Fair, so many parishioners were casually dressed. "The Sisters have done a lot of great work for social justice," Dorsey said. "I think it's deeply offensive to see this incident politicized this way. It's not about religion. It's about the culture war." On a lighter note, he said he couldn't help but notice the Sisters as soon as they entered the sanctuary. "I was there in jeans and T-shirt," he said. "I have to give the Sisters credit for taking far more time getting ready than I did." Dorsey said he was impressed by an e-mail sent to the general mailbox of Most Holy Redeemer after the Mass.

Sister Delta Goodhand, one of the two who received communion from Niederauer, wrote: "Just a quick note to recognize the wonderful mass yesterday at your Church. Your entire congregation was so welcoming and it was great to be able to participate. You are a wonderfully inclusive Church."

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ARE EXTREME WEATHER AND GLOBAL WARMING LINKED?

From an article by Brad Knickerbocker in the *CSMonitor*

Maybe. But maybe not. Scientists say not enough evidence exists to blame global warming for the recent heat waves and flooding seen around the world. The headlines this summer seem ominous: "Extreme Weather Plagues Globe in 2007" "Across Globe, Extremes of Heat and Rain" "Insurers Claim Global Warming Makes Some Regions Too Hot to Handle" "Floating Arctic ice shrinking at record rate" "The World Meteorological Organization reports on extreme weather and climate events."

But is global warming to blame? Maybe. Maybe not. In any case, reports the World Meteorological Organization, "Weather and climate are marked by record extremes in many regions across the world since January 2007." "In January and April 2007 it is likely that global land surface temperatures ranked warmest since records began in 1880...[It is] very likely that hot extremes, heat waves and heavy precipitation events will continue to become more frequent." "The agency found that climate warming was unequivocal and most likely 'due to human activities such as the burning of fossil fuels'," reports CNN. Among the evidence cited by the UN's meteorological agency, according to CNN: "Four monsoon depressions, double the normal number, caused heavy flooding in India, Pakistan andBang-ladesh...England and Wales have experienced their wettest May-to-July period since record-keeping started in 1766...Late last month in Sudan, floods and heavy rain caused 23,000 mud brick homes to collapse, killing at least 62 people..."

Meanwhile, reports the BBC, "Arctic sea ice is expected to retreat to a record low by the end of this summer." Citing measurements from the US National Snow and Ice Data Center (NSIDC), the BBC reports that this summer is likely to end with the lowest ice cover on record. "If you look at data for the first week in August, we are way below what we saw in 2005," explained Mark Serreze, a senior research scientist at the NSIDC. "So unless something really changes, for example the Arctic suddenly becomes a lot colder, it is going to be hard not to beat the previous record."

But as Agence France-Presse reports, one summer of bumptious weather does not confirm global warming. "...establishing a link between climate change and extreme weather is a controversial matter... scientists caution there is not enough evidence to blame global warming for recent extreme weather, and there are those who say there is no proof that extreme weather events are becoming more frequent." Last week's storm that drenched New Jersey and then pounded New York City, for example, "was strong but not particularly rare for a hot summer day," Pennsylvania State University meteorologist Jeff Warner told the Associated Press. Climate scientist James Hansen, director of NASA's Goddard Institute of Space Studies, agreed: 'You cannot blame a single specific event, such as [last] week's storm, on climate change,' he said. 'However,' he added, 'it is fair to ask whether the human changes have altered the likelihood of such events. There the answer seems to be 'yes.'"

Experts often point out that long-term climate and short-term weather (which may be affected by other natural events, such as sea temperature and El Niño) are not the same. With climate, the longer view is more important. Citing a new study from Britain's Met Office, MSNBC reports that "Global warming will slow during the next few years but then speed up again." "There is...particular interest in the coming decade, which represents a key planning horizon for infrastructure upgrades, insurance, energy policy and business development," Douglas Smith and his co-authors noted. The real heat will start after 2009, they said."

Speaking of insurers, generally a conservative lot when it comes to figuring the odds of having to pay claims, Scientific American warns that "as the nation braces for an active hurricane season, private insurers jump ship, leaving federal and state governments liable for ever increasing payouts." "If circumstances change due to global warming that alter the level of risk, insurance companies need to be free to reflect that risk," says David Snyder, vice president and assistant general counsel for the American Insurance Association (AIA). "The reality is that in some places the risk is so severe that [these locations] are uninsurable."

MEXICAN OIL, GAS PIPELINES HIT AGAIN BY EXPLOSIONS

From an article by Imelda Medina on *www.mostlywater.org*

MALTRATA, Mexico, Sept 10 (Reuters)—Six explosions caused by sabotage hit pipelines in Mexico on Monday, disrupting oil and natural gas supplies and forcing thousands from their homes, following similar attacks in July by leftist rebels. Flames shot up 30 feet (10 metres) and black smoke billowed from one explosion at the Balastrera gas pipeline near the town of Maltrata in Veracruz state, as firefighters struggled to control the blaze there. Mexico's state-owned energy monopoly Pemex said there were no injuries from the six blasts, most of which were in Veracruz on the Gulf of Mexico. Some pipelines were hit in several places. It was not immediately clear if bombs had been used. State civil protection authorities said 15,000 people had been evacuated from neighboring villages and towns.

In July, the Popular Revolutionary Army, a leftist guerrilla group known by its Spanish initials EPR, staged four bomb attacks on Pemex pipelines carrying natural gas, liquefied petroleum gas, crude oil and gasoline. Since then, Mexico has deployed soldiers and federal police to protect pipelines but President Felipe Calderon has said it is almost impossible to completely secure the vast network.

The worst damage from Monday's blasts was to two 48-inch (122-cm) diameter natural gas pipelines, but one major 30-inch (76-cm) oil pipeline was also hit. Pemex said exports would not be affected. Pemex, a top supplier of crude to the United States but a net importer of natural gas and gasoline, said businesses in Veracruz and neighboring states would suffer losses of natural gas supplies. The U.S. Energy Information Administration said any loss of crude supplies to United States would be minor, as oil from the area is delivered by ship. "Any impact on the U.S. would be relatively small," EIA analyst Matt Cline said.

Veracruz state Gov. Fidel Herrera said police had chased a black pick-up truck believed to be connected to the attacks along remote highland roads. "They are still looking for this vehicle, which is the only evidence we have that could be connected to the event," Herrera told Mexican radio.

LANCE HAHN 1967-2007

WE MISS YOU NOW AND WE'LL MISS YOU FOREVER

by Sean Forbes—

1. Lance was like a brother to me. Admittedly, we looked pretty different (except when he piled on the pounds) but we were the same in mind, musical tastes, and political views. He was 40—same age as me and we grew up on other sides of the world but we lived the same life. We didn't have to talk—our friendship was rock solid and that never changed. Not having you around is gonna tear me apart.

2. First time we were in touch was when he sent a letter to All The Madmen Records with some Cringer recordings in it. He wanted us to release it. Not a fucking chance pal—they were rubbish. In fact, they never really improved apart from the European tour with Citizen Flesh when Kamala broke her hand play-flirting with Dick and they had Trotsky on drums.

3. The last time I saw Lance was in Japan. We had the game going on with who could go to Japan the most times. I was winning nine to eight. He sent a cocky email saying J Church had a tour booked and that would make us nine times each—however two weeks later Hard Skin got the nod and we were gonna be there at the same time. Taking me into a ten to nine lead. We played a couple gigs together (Oi! and pop punk uniting for two nights only) and got to shop hard and eat even harder. Some geezer wanted to show us around Japanese temples but me and boy wonder slipped out the historical lesson and went to Shinjuku record shopping. He found Crass' Reality Asylum, the Japanese pressing on Rough Trade, and I got a Japanese copy of the second and totally shit Abrasive Wheels album.

4. Lance was fucking useless at replying to emails, sending records to people he'd promised, saying no to food, and singing in tune.

5. He has got to be one of the unluckiest people I know—heart problems, kidney problems, housing getting burnt down, and Gardner, J Church's bass player, getting deported from Japan twice.

6. If you want to do something in his honour—buy Arbor Vitae—best album J Church ever recorded and a pop punk classic. I'm not sure I'll be able to listen to it again in the same way I can no longer listen to Lush.

7. It's almost Christmas 2004 and we are hanging out after a grueling five-week Euro-crust tour for J Church. We are watching Queen on DVD from Live Aid and eating veggie Chinese. Neither of us are Queen fans but the performance blows us away and we watch it two more times. It's a nothing moment—but we were both so content just eating, watching a "classic " band and talking shit.

8. Someone has to complete and publish his long-term project, which was a book on Anarcho Punk (don't call it Peace Punk!!) called Let The Tribe Increase. Please don't let all his work go to waste.

9. With tears running down my face, I'm sad that he's not here, sad that I'll never get to eat with him at the Gipsy Rose Cafe, sad that he wouldn't get to hear and see the proposed Hard skin benefit single of My Friend In a Coma. I know you'd have laughed. We laughed long and hard with Tim Yo when we suggested to him releasing an album of his most wanted rare singles on an album Killed By Cancer. I miss you now and I'll miss you forever.

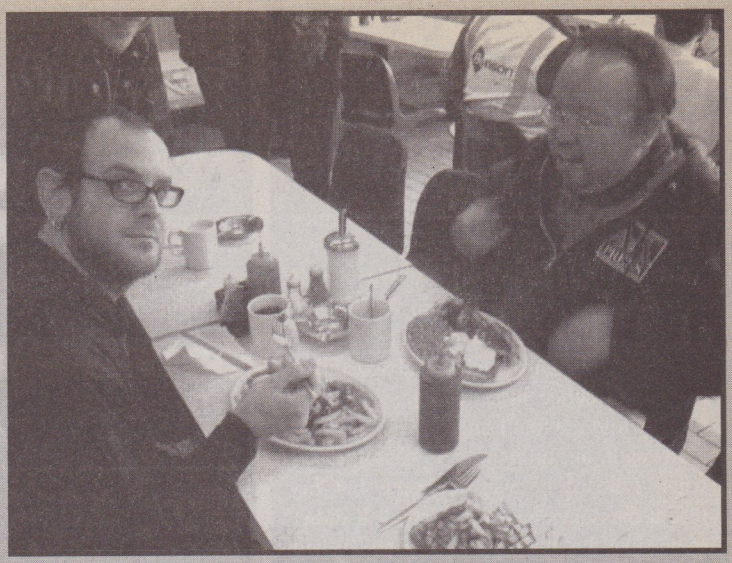
10. At least I won't have to buy a new J Church 7" every other week to complete my collection.

by Kamala—

When a friend dies, one tends to reflect on that person's influence on one's life. For us non-believers, it's the way someone lives beyond death. Lance challenged my puritan work ethic, the idea that a life's value stems from completing chores necessary for survival or earning a wage. I don't remember Lance having a job, nor was he known for his athleticism. Yet, I couldn't ever call him lazy. He was a prolific songwriter, witty lyricist, keen observer of culture and current affairs, a fountain of information for the worst films you'll ever see, and a man with a generous heart. He was always busy. I am both saddened and enraged by his death; saddened because the world has lost a good man at a time when we really need him and enraged because our society didn't value him. The lack of access to health care and money almost certainly caused his early demise. May Lance continue to live in our hearts and inspire us to keep fighting for a just and equitable society

Photo by Jack Barfield

Tomorrow and Forever
by Chris Pfeffer—
"Hey dude, I just got home a couple of days ago. It's been fucked!!! For some reason, it's much, much more frightening to me that a week later the tech told me that I had coded and turned blue and I hadn't even realized it. I knew I had stopped breathing and that I had to be restrained. But I didn't realize I was so close to dying and had to have CPR. When she told me that, casually a couple of days later, that really freaked me out. It's fucked I can't go to Florida. I was really getting excited about that. But it's bad enough that even though I'm home I may have six or more weeks of recovery still. I still haven't gotten over the initial infection and am still on high antibiotics...I had managed to get together $500 for our flights to Florida. Maybe when things are a bit better and I'm up and around we can use that to record a couple of singles or something. Maybe...I just took more vicodin. I've gotta lie down. I really hate painkillers. I hate feeling crazy. Say "hey" to everyone. Gotta start more physical therapy soon to rebuild leg and arm muscles that I lost..."
—Lance (September 26th, 2007)



This is one of the last messages I ever received from Lance Hahn. It scared me because it was the first time I'd heard him admit any fear of death. It also displayed his boundless optimism. Hating painkillers, using money from a scrapped trip to record J Church singles, physical therapy...he wasn't just lying down and waiting for this.

My first exposure to Lance Hahn was through the music of Cringer and then J Church in the early '90s. His bands impressed me by being catchy and melodic, yet not afraid to have a political side. This set them apart from the generic pop-punk of the era. Lance was comfortable writing songs about the situationists and the RAF as well as about his cat or Winnie the Pooh. I saw J Church for the first time in 1993 in Madison, Wisconsin, and they were great—honest and enjoyable. I followed the band's progress through the '90s. As their popularity and production values grew, their songs always maintained Lance's unique balance of the personal / political, humorous / plaintive, and simple / insightful.

I didn't realize that Lance had moved to Austin until he started working at Sound Exchange in 2002. It was a little weird running into this guy, whose music and lyrics I respected, down at the local record store. Yet, Lance was instantly approachable and conversational. Him and his co-worker Ben White (of Snakepit fame) became fast friends, and when Ben mentioned that he and Lance were talking about forming an Austin chapter of J Church, I immediately volunteered my services. On nothing more than Ben's vote-of-confidence for me, we were J Church Austin—no tryouts, no pretense. Ben's old friend from Richmond, David DiDonato, was also roped in as lead guitarist.

Instead of warming up with a few old J Church classics for our first practice, Lance hit us with what would become the title track to the Society is a Carnivorous Flower LP—a 15-minute epic comprised of several "movements" with thematic lyrics addressing the Anarchist movement of Paris 1968. It was an ambitious task, but it ended up being a really fun song that I'm still very proud of. Lance's "Cradle to the Grave" of sorts. By early 2003, we'd recorded the Society LP, later to be released on No Idea plus five songs, which would end up being released as a split LP with my other band Storm The Tower on Broken Rekids.

By the summer of 2003, we embarked on a full six-week U.S. tour with Storm The Tower, complete with David's wife and baby daughter all in one van. It was trying at times, but also really fun. The winter of the same year brought us to Japan, something that was unbelievable for Ben, David, and I. It was an amazing experience, and I'll be eternally grateful to Lance for providing us the opportunity. We met so many great people and witnessed such awesome bands. We toured the east coast in spring of 2004 with The Methadones from Chicago. The vibe was a little different...lots of bar shows, but still fun. That summer we recorded in my living room with our friend Stan Wright; tracking six originals and six covers for a Japan-only release on Snuffy Smile. We had a mini tour of the southeast and our first appearance at the annual "Fest" in Gainesville. Then we were lucky enough to go to Europe for a five-week jaunt. It was a long, cold trip, and David could only commit to the first two weeks, so we simplified to a three-piece. It became evident on this tour that J Church wasn't drawing the same numbers as years past. Still, Lance always gave it his all, and only complained in sarcasm along with the rest of us. Even when he was completely sick and delirious for days on end in France, not playing was never an option. In 2005 we returned to Japan to tour with our friends The Urchin. We made a short mid-west trip to play with Dillinger Four in Minneapolis on the 4th of July, and then returned to Florida with The Urchin in tow for the "Fest" that fall. We recorded The Horror Of Life LP in early 2006. Lance still didn't know he was sick, and we didn't know this would be our final LP, which seems unreal considering some of the lyrics. We set out for the west coast early in the summer of 2006. Lance seemed easily fatigued on this trip, and complained of leg cramps that he attributed to the heat. One week after we got home from the tour, Lance called me, laughing as usual..."dude, I figured out what's wrong with me! Liberty made me go to the hospital and it turns out that I have kidney failure. Crazy, huh?!"

Not to bore with mundane touring details, but these were the bonds of our friendship. Drive around with someone in a van for a few years and you'll get to know them maybe more than you want to. I'm sure I rolled my eyes at some of his endless anecdotes, and I certainly spent many a sleepless night next to a mercilessly snoring Lance. But Lance's over-ambition and naive optimism helped enable him to write and record over ten LPs and countless singles, tour the world many times over, research and write a book on an elusive punk subculture 20 years after the fact, consistently self-publish a fanzine of his own writings, devour literature on obscure philosophical anarchist theory, watch every foreign film, build, lose, and rebuild an extensive record and film collection

after a fire, keep up with major league baseball, work a steady job, maintain a loving relationship and friendships world-wide—all this before the age of 40. Yet he was still such a nice, laid back guy...we should all be so lucky.

I only saw Lance three or four times this year. That's just how he was—always close yet he kept to himself. We played two shows this year, both in Austin last spring. We started making plans to play the "Fest" in Florida again and scheduled our first practice in six months, but then Liberty told me that Lance was in the hospital with an infection. I was relieved when I heard he was released, but his recent messages had me worried. It didn't seem like he was getting better. When Liberty called to tell me he was in a coma, my heart sank. I feared the worst. When I heard the news on Sunday, I can't say I was completely surprised. I didn't really know how to feel. I was in the middle of a long drive home from New Orleans, so I had a lot of time to think. I spent the last few days in my room listening to his songs and communicating with friends from all over.. It's amazing to see the instant outpouring of grief and support from all over. It's been one of the saddest times in my life, but when I listen to the music, I can picture Lance laughing and shaking his head. He would never want anyone to feel bad on his account.

What now but to remember? Lance's legacy beyond his music and writing will be the memory of his kindness and enduring enthusiasm regardless of trends or scene politics. You'll have a hard time finding anyone with anything negative to say about the man. He always maintained a childlike idealism, and with his ever-present laugh avoided being jaded by life. He was hyper-intelligent, an encyclopedia of knowledge, yet he never talked down to anyone or made them feel left out of the conversation. He never learned to drive. He packed poorly for trips. He was always up for a good meal, as evidenced by the "recommended eating list" in our last record. He was obsessed with all things cute, always picking up weird little toys on the road. He loved telling ghost stories. He could play any song ever written on guitar, although sometimes he couldn't figure out how to work his own amp...but he didn't care, y'know?!

I was talking to Var from No Idea the other day, and he mentioned how Lance would write lyrics that most people would never attempt, much less work into a song. Yet later, you find yourself remembering those words, singing them, struck by the genius of their simplicity. I guess that is the real truth about Lance Hahn. He was a simple genius and a friend to all.

"Challenging your heart to stop, too much is never enough / My kidneys will break down and cry / No one is too young to die / It's no big deal, these things you feel / It's no big deal, to feel so real..."
—from "Keep Smiling America" 2003

by Gordon Zola—

Lance was an auto-didact, a student of history, especially anarchist history. I mean geez, he even put Leon Czolgosz, unlabeled, on a J Church shirt. He was also sweet, kind, thoughtful, and quietly funny. He knew how to make people feel good but more than that, he cared about making people feel good. He carried a million details in his brain, surprising you with something you said offhand at some show or some party months before. He was a special, special man.

Lance lived above me on Valencia St, half a block from Epicenter Zone. Lance's apartment was referred to as jokingly "The Crash Pad" after an SF Weekly reporter dubbed it that in an article.* Our apartment was already name "House of Failure" because our phone number was 552-FAIL. Oh, those early '90s…

It seems symbolic that many of his songs remind me of our shared neighborhood. Early J Church is so time and place for me: all songs about the Mission in the early '90s., While traveling out of the Bay Area for an extended period, and leaving from my apartment on Mission St , "November" made me cry while riding a train through Eastern Europe. I had made a Mission District bands cassette and as soon as he mentioned rain on Mission St, I started bawling.

I think my favorite thing about Lance was just running into him in the street. I can think of hours spent on Market/14th, at 16th/Valencia, in front of Lost Weekend, just gossiping, talking about bands, demonstrations and friends. He made this city a better place by just being around, having time to hang out. He also rarely missed a demonstration. He had good priorities even if rather than being in front with a bullhorn he's be bringing up the rear, poking fun at the sectarians and trying-too-hard anarchist kids. I think he'd appreciate that my favorite picture of him was from the San Francisco Rodney King riots. Hip-hoppers and punks were unified in their desire to liberate electronics to facilitate their communication with a hostile world. Somewhere, maybe his room, I saw a picture of Lance coming out of an electronics store with his hands full and his eyes blacked out, like any punk wouldn't recognize his long hair, his slouch and his band t-shirt. Or maybe I just made up that picture in my head. Lance still seems like a San Francisco icon 7 years after moving to Texas.

Another thing was seeing him walk across the club without kids coming up to talk to him. He was probably the most approachable band guy I've ever met, constantly talking to kids who came to SF hoping to see him working his shift at Epicenter or at some of the bars, taquerias, and cafes he mentioning in his songs, if not his shows. Occasionally he'd have to hide from a creepy one, but that was rare. Usually he'd hang out, talk about their hometown (which he probably had played), and generally treat them as a new friend. There were times he really represented all that the punk scene should have been.

I hadn't seen Lance in awhile when I got the word he went into a coma...My heart goes out to his partner and his friends there. To many of us in San Francisco, or maybe just to me, his bad health was a little hard to fathom. My memory of Lance is full of mellow energy, happy to see you, happy to chat, always looking for new bands and new fun. I imagine that the last couple of years, being on dialysis, not being able to go to every show, was incredibly hard for him. But I always thought I'd just run into him in the Mission or at a show one day. That he would have beaten his bad organs, that he'd be the same old Lance. Bye Lance. You are missed already.

Photo by Martin Sorrondeguy

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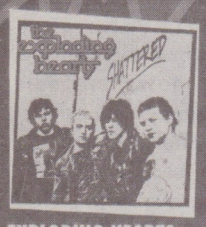
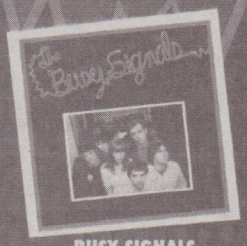
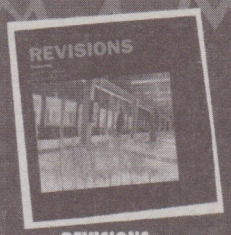


EXPLODING HEARTS
shattered LP



BUSY SIGNALS
LP/CD



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revised observations
LP/CD
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RIFF RANDELLS
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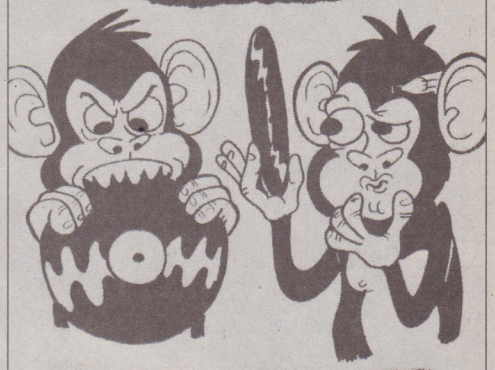

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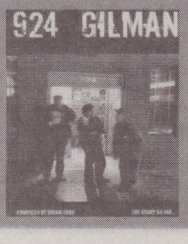


"The best thing I took from my time at Gilman was that it made me feel like I could go out and do anything I wanted if I set my mind to it. Also, that I could be a vital part of the music community, even if I wasn't in a band. I was given the opportunity there to interact with all different types of people, young, old, rich, poor, white, black, men, women. I experienced quite a bit of personal growth at Gilman. It wasn't just "something to do" for me, it was a passion, and to be able to be involved with something you're passionate about feels amazing. ... Sometimes I think about all the people out there... being inspired by the idea of Gilman (like I was). Maybe they live too far away and can never go there and experience the reality, but the idea of the place, the existence of the place, the potential of the place, could lead them in the same direction, even if it's just in their heads." -- Jessica S. '02 (excerpt from 924 Gilman book)

WHAT IF GODS LIE

By Andreas Thrashbastard

After releasing a new LP earlier this year on Despotic Records, and touring Europe for the first time this summer with cool shows at Gdansk DIY Fest and Yellow Dog Festival, Mexican outfit What If Gods Lie has a lot to talk about.

MRR: Okay, first, standard introduction—please introduce yourself. Tell me who's in the band and what they do.

Ame: Bass and chorus.
Isaac: Drums and lyrics.
Alberto: Guitar, screams and lyrics.

MRR:What If Gods Lie has been together for a while, right? When did the band get together? Any releases or line-up changes? You know, something like a short (or longer) band history.

Isaac: We formed in 2002-2003. We started with Carlos, Alberto, and me. We did the first recording, eleven tracks divided in three releases: AXT Split, All Systems Fail Split, and one song for the *Verborrea* compilation CD. After this recording, Carlos decided to quit the band. We started practicing with some other guys, but none of them matched with us. We had completed writing the next record, *Third World*, and had not found a bass player yet, so we finished the work with only two members. Alberto played guitar, bass, and also sang for this recording. He has 4 arms! Later, America became the bass player. She played drums before in some other projects, and we thought she could learn to play bass. She's Alberto's girlfriend. That's how What if Gods Lies formed into the band we are now.

MRR: What inspired you to play in bands—to start Hog, Attack, and What If Gods Lie?

Salinas: I always have identified with the punk movement, and I will continue to.

Isaac: I think life is boring if we don't do what we like. In this case, we like punk noises. We started the band after the break up of Hog—two years later I think. The first name of the band was Punk Noise Attack but we decided to change it—maybe because we wanted a representative name, one closer to our ideals in certain ways. The band's inspiration was things we see and live every day, mainly those things that cause destruction to humanity—like globalization, religion, and capitalism. Of course, we include fun in the inspiration. These things made us start a band. We don't want to stay silent and submissive, to believe all the BS bastards in power say.

MRR: What bands influenced you the most (personally, but also as a band)? What bands do you listen right now?

Salinas: Chronicle Diarrhoea, Extreme Noise Terror, Discharge, Sheer Terror, Atoxxxico, Neurosis, and current bands like Severed Head of State, World Burns To Death, Born Dead Icons, and many others.

Isaac: In general, the band is influenced by other d-beat bands, from Discharge to present. Each of us has different influences, for me bands like Germs, Final Conflict, Subhumans, GBH, Minor Threat, Crucifix, Black Flag, DRI, etc. Right now I listen to bands like Behind Enemy Lines, Inepsy, World Burns To Death, and bands I've always enjoyed. . . an endless list, man! There's always something new.

MRR: How did you get into hardcore/punk? Can you find a certain evolution in your life in relation to the hardcore/punk ideology? I mean, how much does it affect your live nowadays?

Salinas: I used to listen to grind and classic metal bands but in 1992 when I listened to Atoxxxico (a local HC band) and Extreme Noise Terror I felt totally identified. Well, I think HC bands use to have a social-critical and political aspect, and maybe that's the reason I felt identified with it. Mexico has a very dark history of repression against youth expressions. This started with events that happened in the '60s and '70s, when the two main universities united to protest, first against police brutality and illegality, among other issues. When they supported syndicates and strikes, it made sense because strikers were their parents. This gave origin to slaughters, disappearances, and repressions. The state saw youth as a threat. Since those days, the state has created disinformation campaigns for the new generations, and the media is involved everywhere. We live and play HC, and we need a state reform (better said, we don't need the state!) because we need to live with dignity. For us, that is part of HC/Punk.

Isaac: It all started with skateboarding for me, not directly from the punk scene here in Mexico. I heard hardcore punk bands before I knew the HC/Punk scene. I started going to gigs when I knew about "El Chopo" (a market on the street in Mexico City where people use to trade and sell recordings of rock, metal, reggae, punk, etc.). I've been always attracted to lyrics of punk "music"—I mean, by its content—so I started realizing that there are different ways to make a better life, like organizing communities and being independent of the system, something I don't see a lot here in Mexico. We still have some good examples like Zapatistas, who don't need the modern world, and know how to live without "progress" and "civilization," respecting people and mother nature. Punk affected my life because it changed the way I see many things around me. It gave me a new perspective, and now I try to look for different alternatives instead of looking to the traditional way that is oriented to marketing, profit and all that shit.

MRR: What do you do with your lives besides playing music?

Salinas: I work in a musical instruments store.

Ame: I am studying for a degree in Information Sciences.

Isaac: Important things? I skate every time I can, and read, read, read.

MRR: You're from Mexico. It's a country with a long and rich history of HC/punk with a bunch of legendary bands. How is the scene nowadays? What's it like being a Mexican HC/punk band?

Salinas: I think nowadays people like this genre. New generations are open to different styles related with metal and things like that. In the past, punks were more radical, because they said, "punk is punk and there's no other thing," and I think people have become more tolerant. For example, there are guys that used to listen to emo or "happy punk" bands, kind of like Blink-182, and now they're crusties. In other times they were called "posers;" but in my opinion, we have the right to change if it's for good reasons. It's better if someone

understands what punk really means and not only because they want to get attention from their moms or neighbours—I mean, a change of their hearts and minds.
Isaac: The scene has changed these days. It's not as much that the bands themselves have changed, but we have more interaction with foreign bands, so we have the opportunities to help each other as a HC/punk scene and make it bigger. Being a Mexican band means surviving difficulties, like affording costs of shows, dealing with cops and conservative society because of the way we look or the way we think. In my opinion, we have the same kind of problems every HC/punk scene all over the world has, but we are here because we are convinced of what we do.

MRR: Any good bands from Mexico you would recommend?
Salinas: For those record collectors with a real "punk spirit," I recommend: M.E.L.I., Regeneración, Constructores del Odio, Atoxxxico and Masacre 68.
Isaac: Bumbklaatt is one of my favorites.

MRR: Are you involved in other political or cultural activities?
Salinas: It's good to mention that Mexico has several "faces" and histories. For example, the most punished by poverty and abandonment are the south and central zones of the country, places where guerrilla movements have arisen (states such as Oaxaca, Chiapas, and Guerrero), while in the big cities, things are different for many reasons. Access to firearms is almost impossible and the majority of owners have no licences. Laws are hard with this (you can be considered a suspicious assassin) so movements are represented by marches, meetings, and by people who support causes peacefully—in some cases by being part of a march or setting up a show.
Isaac: Spread information, support groups with a social cause, go to meetings and marches with a just cause, give information to persons not involved in the movement like family and friends. I mean, give information about web pages, publications, books, movies, and things like that. I think we can contribute to a change if we give information to people and those people help with giving the same info to more people, and so on.

MRR: There are more and more foreign bands coming to Mexico nowadays: Born/Dead, I Object, and Pisschrist, just to mention a few. Has it any impact on the scene? Any proposals or recommendations about why and how foreign bands should or could tour Mexico?
Isaac: For sure it has an impact, because we learn about them. People in the scene here get very excited when they know a foreign band is coming, venues fill up almost all the time in such cases. Recommendations: learn more Spanish so you can interact with more people here, and you should come here if you want to have fun and good times. People are very hospitable. Come here if you want to know more about Mexican culture, too. You can contact with us if you wish to come here to play. We can talk and make a plan. Please write to whatifgodslie@hotmail.com.

MRR: You released a new LP last year on Despotic Records from the U.S. after putting out a split 7" with the German band AXT and a split CD with All Systems Fail. How are the reactions to the LP?
Any plans for new releases?
Isaac: Reactions have been positive because the new LP gave us the opportunity to meet more people involved in the scene, and we play more shows now. I think this is a result of the band's maturity. We found a good way to make things work in the band. For now, we are working on new stuff, and we want to make a new release. We will see after the next tour who will be the label for this recording. The fact is that we are very grateful to Alan "Despotic Recs," Andreas "Thrashbastard" and Luis "Cryptas" for all the support on the recordings we have made.

MRR: Let's talk a bit about politics. There were presidential elections last summer, and you got a conservative government again. A lot of people and the runner-up think the elections were manipulated (nothing new in Mexican political history). What do you think about the whole thing?
Salinas: It's a fact and nothing new. The good thing about it is the social mobilization the election fraud caused (there are some pictures in our space we took ourselves). It is calculated about three million persons showed up in the downtown meeting asking for the recounting of the votes. The counting didn't happen because they know about the vote theft. Something important must happen in Mexico. People can't deal with extreme poverty and injustice anymore. Just take a look around the suburbs and realize what I'm saying. Poverty is everywhere and the "new government" doesn't give a fuck about it.
Isaac: We are fucked up! Politics with the new government means a few rich and tons of poor people. It is capitalistic depredation in its maximum expression: no labor rights, no human rights, environmental destruction, repression, and impunity for the oppressor. The Catholic Church is involved too, so we are in times of regression and obscurantism. Enterprises and big corporations make decisions, not the president-marionette. Fuck it! The economic model sucks. In my opinion, we need new ways of life based on community and respect for the environment, as I mentioned before.

MRR: Political repression is very harsh in Mexico. A lot of people who were involved in activities in Oaxaca or Atenco are still in jail, but those responsible for police violence, sexual violations, and torture haven't faced court justice so far. On the other hand, Mexican society seems to be much more politicized. A lot of people are involved in political activities. What do you think are the reasons? And how is the HC/punk movement connected to all this?
Isaac: Political repression means only one thing: they want to eliminate those who interrupt the business of power no matter the costs, including lives (as happened in Oaxaca and Atenco, to

mention some examples). The main problem for them is that society will wake up and see what's really happening. Fear is the formula, media and repression are the ways, and they label those who think differently as "terrorists". More people in political activities could stop these abuses. Civil disobedience works if more people unite and don't give up.

MRR: There is a big discussion right now about legalization of abortion in Mexico. At least in Mexico City, laws were changed and now it's legal to abort until the twelfth week. But this legalization provoked heavy reactions from the conservative part of society, especially the Catholic Church. And legalization of abortion for all of Mexico seems still to be far away. Please give us some background info.

Ame: Before abortion legalization, people were penalized with jail. Now girls are free of penalties.

Salinas: The church and the conservative government created the controversy. Mexico as any third world country has population exploitation that leads to poverty—insufficient education, and an army of "blind" workers to serve the state, that's what really they want.

Isaac: Even when local legislators approved abortion, the federal government wanted to get everything back. It shows the authoritarianism and the big influence of the Vatican.

MRR: Violence against women is still a very big issue in Mexico and a keystone to maintaining patriarchal structures (see discussion about abortion, Ciudad Juarez, Atenco, etc.). And besides this, Mexican society is still macho. What are your experiences with machismo?

Ame: That's it. The macho attitude has existed since Christianity was invented, and since Mexico is a Catholic country, we have no doubt that we live with machismo. Women are considered the "weak sex." The leader of the family is the man, who gives his wife only home tasks. Men make decisions. This is a product of poor education. Genocide in Ciudad Juarez is a good example; there are no solutions to solve this problem, just hypotheses. The fact is that women are being assassinated and sexually tortured. They are young, with low incomes. Impunity is behind everything. As a conclusion, machismo in Mexico is everywhere and, unfortunately, we have a corrupt government that allows this macho, stupid culture.

MRR: What about sexism in the HC/Punk-scene? Any positive or negative stories to tell? Is sexism still a problem?

Ame: There is no problem when men in the scene think men and women are equal, but we can find people (of both sexes) who think women are inferior.

MRR: Why do you think fewer woman than men are involved in the scene? Do you think it has something to do with confidence? Are women taken as seriously as their male counterparts?

Ame: This is an important point. Most women are in the scene because of their boyfriends. They want to fit in with them, so women get involved in the scene. I think in certain way that's cool. The negative part is when they break up, because women leave the scene. I think it's more about a sincere attitude of what's going on in your mind, and the congruence between what you do and what you say.

MRR: Are the constraints placed upon women in the HC/punk scene a reflection of those generated by mainstream society?

Isaac: In some cases we still live with it, but I don't think it's significant in the HC/Punk scene.

MRR: Is aggression (violent dancing, for example) a deterrent for women getting involved?

Ame: Not here in Mexico. Women know the dancing is violent. Some of them push others and all that. To be more specific, in the state of Toluca the dancing is very violent, more than in other places I know, and there are women that enjoy it.

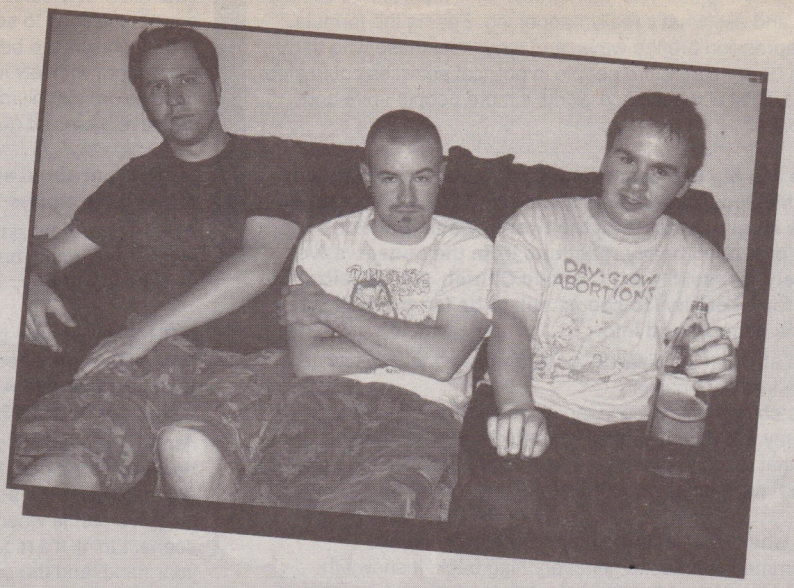
MRR: Ok, we are through. Anything else you would like to add? Upcoming releases, future plans, greetings, contact, etc/?

Salinas: Infinite thanks to Andreas for all the support and the people involved in the organization of our shows in Europe.

Ame: Thanks for the support.

Isaac: Thanks for the interview. You can contact What If Gods Lie through Myspace or the e-mail mentioned in this interview.
I would like to end with this phrase:
"Ignorance and obscurantism have never produced anything other than flocks of slaves for tyranny" (Zapata, "A Letter to Pancho Villa").

THE CRAWLERS



ASK ANY PUNK ABOUT PORTLAND, OREGON, AND THEY WILL UNDOUBTEDLY USE THE TERM "PORTLAND SOUND." THIS USUALLY MEANS MIMICKING THE STYLE AND LOOK OF GROUPS FROM JAPAN, SCANDINAVIA, OR ENGLAND. IN THE 80S PORTLAND DID HAVE ITS OWN UNIQUE SOUND WITH BANDS LIKE POISON IDEA, LOCKJAW, FINAL WARNING, SADO NATION, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY THE WIPERS–THESE BANDS' SOUNDS WERE SHAPED BY THE CITY, THE CLIMATE, AND THE TIMES. MOVE FORWARD TO 2007 IN AN OUTER SOUTHEAST PORTLAND LIVING ROOM WHERE THE THREE MEMBERS OF THE CRAWLERS ARE ASSEMBLED FOR THIS INTERVIEW. IF THERE IS A "PORTLAND SOUND," THEN THESE GUYS ARE THE POSTER CHILDREN. THEIR MUSIC REFLECTS THE CITY, THE PEOPLE IN IT, AND THEIR POLITICS. THEIR SOUND IS 82ND AVENUE, SWAN ISLAND, FELONY FLATS, THE STINK OF CAMAS, WASHINGTON COMING IN FROM THE NORTH, AND THE SICK SENSE OF HUMOR THAT PEOPLE FROM THIS CITY CULTIVATE. THIS IS PORTLAND HARDCORE, SO FUCK OFF! INTERVIEW BY PAT THIELGES. PHOTOS BY WILL GABRIEL, NIKOL KING, AND TEAMGOON.COM.

MRR: Introduce yourselves and let's have a rundown of former bands you were in. Rick, you go first since you have so many.
Rick: My name is Rick Donaldson. I do bass and vocals. All the bands I have been in are: Distraught (the early Distraught before the one in New York), One Arm and Dead, Starved and Delirious, Hardship, The Culprits, and The Crawlers.
Tucker: My name is Tucker Reda. I play guitar, I was in No Heroes, Offense, and presently the Crawlers.
Dan: Dan Sovince. I play drums. I played in a band in high school called No Ordinary. It didn't work out. Then I was in a metal band after high school called Bedlam Massacre...it didn't work out. And now I'm in the Crawlers.

MRR: And that won't work out!
All: Hardee-har-har!

MRR: Portland is a city of vices. What is your favorite vice?
Rick: Marijuana.
Tucker: Booze.

MRR: How about pornography? (Portland has the most adult businesses of any city in the US for its size.)
Dan: I'll take porn and booze.
Tucker: Booze, porn, and records!

MRR: Well, collecting records and porno are pretty much the same, aren't they?
Tucker: You are so right...excellent point!

MRR: Why the Crawlers?
Rick: Well, I named the band. I just wanted a classic name that people wouldn't forget. I mean, it's kind of generic but I figured it would stick in peoples' heads, like they wouldn't read a flier and see something like "Guttural Death Sentence" or "Bludgeoned Prostitute." I just wanted something plain and simple. I looked on Google, I looked on eBay, I even Myspaced it-there haven't been any bands called The Crawlers since the 60s.

MRR: Yeah, that's what I thought of when I heard the name: "this sounds like some garage band from one of those *Nuggets* comps." It's just an awesome name.

Rick: Yeah, the biggest band with a name closest to it was a 70s rock band called Crawler, and they were fucking horrible!

Tucker: I like the name cause it sounds like one of the early LA bands like The Chiefs, The Germs, or The Gears. You know, The Crawlers. Plus, Charles Manson and company had the whole "Creepy Crawl" thing.

MRR: Fair enough. So tell me, what does the Portland punk scene both past and present mean to you guys?

Rick: Well, I'll be straight up here. When I first moved to Portland it really wasn't my kinda scene.

MRR: When was that and why?

Rick: I first started coming to shows here in '89 but I moved here in 1991 and it just wasn't my scene, except for certain bands that were really good, like Poison Idea, Apt 3g, Mule.

MRR: Those are pretty much the same bands, right?

Rick: Yeah, I also thought Resist were good, Deprived were good, but it was just all a bit too political for me. Now, there is still that political edge to bands and that crust scene, but it's more relaxed. A lot of the younger kids are going back to the old school stuff. I think they got kinda burned out on all that other shit. So right now is a really good time to be in a band and to put out records cause we have a lot more people behind us now. I mean, if we would've done this band in 1993 I don't think anyone would have given a shit about us.

Dan: Yeah, it's kind of like going back to the basics but shedding a new light on it all. A lot of folks went in one direction and were sitting here saying "Hey, c'mon back, punk is just as good as it always was!"

Rick: But at the same time you have to be really fucking good too. I consider ourselves to be pretty fucking tight. If we weren't, no one would really give us a chance cause some folks in Portland are pretty picky about what they like and don't like.

Tucker: Portland punk got me through high school when I first got into it through bands like Statch and the Rapes, All Out, The Speds and later The Observers. That's when I really got involved and started taking pictures, going to shows, playing in a band, and so on. In 2005 I think things here got kind of stagnant and boring, but now things are really coming back in terms of PDX punk, kids want to have fun again.

Dan: I am amazed how kids are getting into vinyl again, they have all these MP3 and other media players now but a lot of them are like "Fuck that! I want a good old fashioned record player," so that is really great.

MRR: Yeah, I was always afraid that with CDs and downloading music that kids were going to just let vinyl die. But anyhow, I have always kind of noticed that throughout Portland's punk history there are always two or more scenes running at the same time that never quite seem to meet on common ground. Like when I moved out here from Kentucky about eight years ago there seemed to be two scenes of bands. You had the Tragedy camp on one side and the older "Portland style" camp on the other. And now there is a third camp of bands like yourselves and others.

Tucker: It's definitely divided. There are a lot of sub-genres that definitely stand out, and there's not a whole lot of support or interaction between each of these scenes.

Rick: If there are two camps though, we're the camp with the least amount of firewood. Cause how many bands like the Crawlers are there really in Portland? Just playing straight up old school hardcore, it's either more thrashy metal-driven or really crusty. Our friends in LA say we are more like a part of their scene down there even though we are from Portland, and I agree. We're catchier and less crusty, and that's pretty much our biggest fan base outside of Portland: the LA area. If you look at our Myspace page we have like 1200 friends and I would say about 800 of them are from SoCal.

MRR: Yeah, that is one thing I wanted to ask you guys about, the connection between the Crawlers and the Southern California punk scene. You have done two tours there so far.

Tucker: The scene down there is like everything I ever read about in books like *American Hardcore*, or *Get in the Van*, it's all fucking true! The kids are unbelievably rambunctious as all hell. You saw blood at just about every show we played there.

Rick: In the last four shows we played, there've been three fights, two in California and when we got back here to Portland and played there was a huge fucking fight, like ten guys beating up one guy.

Dan: It's not like we were calling for the fights, it's just like when we play the kids get really into it and that shit just happens.

Rick: I'm 35 fucking years old now, and half these fucking kids could kick my ass, so what the fuck am I gonna do, take 'em out with my beer belly?

Tucker: But yeah, to answer your question, we have a lot in common with the Southern California scene. They have a lot of awesome bands down there that we get along with really well, like Tippers Gore, Bad Reaction, Friendly Neighbors, G.O.P, Critical Picnic...I could name names for ever.

MRR: You guys seem to have a good exchange with SoCal. You play there and most of those bands come here to play and are really well received. How did that come about?

Rick: I'd say there are three different reasons: one, we look like normal guys and so do they. If you're normal working class guys, like regular old dudes, do you really want to hang out with a bunch of guys who slum it on the street and spare change and let their dogs suffer and die just so they can get a 40 of beer? Number two, the music we play is pretty much the same kinda sound. And I think the other thing is that we aren't politically correct and neither are a lot of those bands. We say all kinds of fucking hilarious shit, but it's all really tongue in cheek. It's all for fun. A

lot of folks here in Portland think a lot of the shit we say isn't really very nice, but if you got to know us we're not like a bunch of dickheads. I mean, even Tucker and I are vegetarians!

MRR: In the past decade or so, Portland has become really known for its punk scene and has attracted a lot of people from all over to visit and even move here. What do you think are some of the common misconceptions people have about Portland before they come here?

Tucker: Portland could be the place to be, but in the scene that I am familiar with, which I will call the "Standard Tuning Scene," there are a lot of awesome people and awesome bands doing a lot of things at once. And that is great, but it can sometimes prevent things from getting done. There is a lot of awesome music being made but it's not as productive as it could be.

Dan: This place has all the outlets you need, like cheap recording. The venues are here, the people are here, but I think a lot of what I notice that is different about Portland from other cities is the substance abuse. People here are more interested in how they are going to get fucked up or drunk than what bands they are going to see that night. They usually want to make sure there's gonna be a good bar and this and that, and everything from hard to soft drugs. But in places like Southern California kids are more worried about how loud it's going to be, or how many kids are going to show up. They want to know more about the show itself and don't really care about getting drunk. They just want to bash into people and have fun.

Rick: I think one of the weakest links of Portland is that the all-ages scene here has never been consistent. It's always starting, every single place, once it opens, the longest it's going to run is about three years and then it's gonna go under.

MRR: Like X-Ray Café.

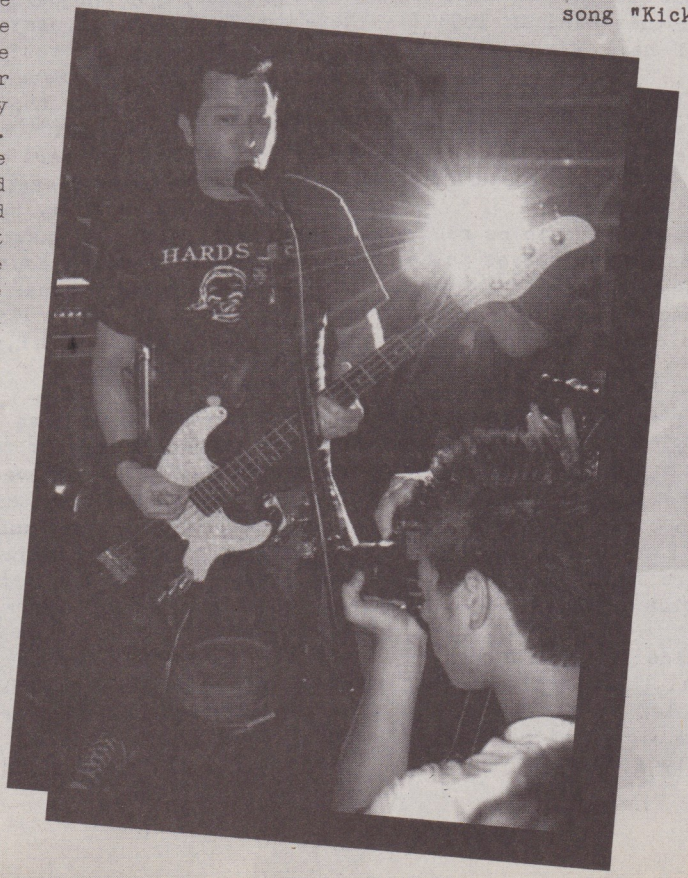
Rick: X-Ray Café was the best all ages club ever in Portland and it lasted from like 1990 to 1993. I was there at the very last show and literally a riot broke out. We had to get out of there or we were gonna get tear gassed.

MRR: Shit like that seems to be not just a Portland thing but a problem with all-ages venues all over the world. You can't trust kids and you can't trust the cops. You would like to think that the punk scene is some sort of utopian society where likes take care of likes, but that just isn't the case.

Rick: When the Culprits were around we never played the same place twice because they always closed down before we could. The only place we played often was at Porky's. We played there about 50 times cause they were the only place that would have us and would stay open.

MRR: Porky's on Lombard? That place is called The Eagle now (a well known Portland leather bar).

Tucker: They were gonna name it Manaconda. That's a great name for a male-oriented skin bar. I could have a beer there and feel good about it!



MRR: But back to the question: what do you think Joe and Jane hardcore from Anytown, USA think Portland is all about from listening to records and reading scene reports?

Rick: They probably think that it is the political punk rock Mecca. But then they come here and meet people preaching one thing at a show but then going out and buying a case of Budweiser like anybody else that supports corporations. There are no perfect fucking people in this town and anybody who thinks they are...they are just fucking ridiculous. People who don't drive cars cause they don't want to support the oil wars.

Tucker: Then they fly to Europe to tour.

Rick: Exactly. If you're going to be that politically correct then you should live in a cardboard box.

Tucker: You should live in a box and eat nothing that casts a shadow. But another misconception about Portland is this: a friend of mine would go on tour with his bands and people would ask him things like, "Oh you're from Portland? You must get to see Poison Idea and Defiance all the time!" And that is definitely not the case whatsoever.

MRR: On a different note, when I got your records, one of the first things I noticed was that a lot of humor and thought go into a lot of your lyrics. I want to bring up a few of your songs and perhaps you can tell us what the lyrics are all about. How about the song "Kicked Off EBay?"

Rick: Well, I am kind of an eBay nerd and I have known a few people who got kicked off for stealing and doing all this fucked up shit and I just wanted to write a humorous fictional account of it. Well, most of it is fiction but I know a certain gentleman who I used to be in a band with who got kicked off for not paying sellers fees and selling a lot of stuff to support his meth habit.

MRR: So what do you guys think of eBay? A lot of folks say it is really hurting the punk scene and record collecting. What do you say?

Tucker: For collecting it's made it hard in a smaller town like Portland where there are only one or two specialty shops. With the internet and eBay these

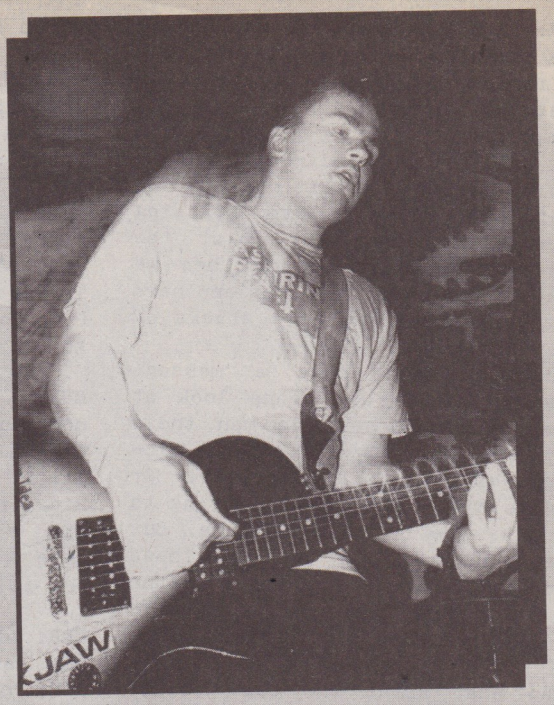
folks can all think they know what they're talking about and jack their prices up. But then you have guys asking $50 for a third pressing Mystic 7" from 1988 with an unglued paper cover. Then you know their heads are up their ass.
Rick: I think that eBay is one of the greatest inventions ever!
Tucker: It saved your ass a couple times.
Rick: Hell yeah, it saved my ass. I've paid my rent with eBay before.

MRR: What about "Village of the Damned?" I have a feeling that's all about Portland.
Tucker: It's all a true story.

MRR: What about the song "I've Met Cooler Hippies?"
Tucker: Well, I get around by foot/skateboard/bus, so I encounter damn near every walk of life. And hippies are just generally more pleasant to deal with than almost anyone from another counterculture. Sure, they smell bad and their music blows ass, but they don't hassle you about your diet. I'm talking about you, bike punks! Hippies do their thing and don't give two shits about anyone else. The ones I've encountered at least.

MRR: This is a question I wanted to ask you, Rick. At your last show before you played the song "Evil Tithes" you said some pretty angry things to say about being raised in a religious family. Were you raised Mormon?
Rick: No, I'm not Mormon. I was adopted by my grandparents who were Agnostic but they had eight kids and all of them were really heavily religious. Mostly Baptist. So when I was a kid they filled me full of shit, they told me I was going to burn in hell for wearing a Duran Duran shirt when I was in 7th grade. They told me that if I smoked I would go to hell and all of this other shit. So basically, I grew up in fear of God and religion. When you're a kid and have visions of Satan and shit when you're trying to sleep, that's not a very good thing. But "Tithes"-a lot of folks don't know what that word means but that is the money that you put in the basket at church. And really, what a way to make a living, sit around and preach a bunch of shit out of a bible and then get a paycheck every week and have people in the church do anything for them. Fuck, even Mormons take care of their people better than Baptists do. A Baptist will let you starve to death, but with Mormons, you could be on the street and the church will take care of you. But I just think that religion is such a farce that it makes it really hard for me to ever believe any of that shit due to my upbringing. I'm glad I wrote that song. I think it's one of the better ones on the album.

MRR: Who is the song "Fire in Cairo" by?
Rick: The Cure, but we definitely "punked it up" quite a bit though. That was actually recorded when we did the first 7" but we didn't want to put a cover on our first release.



MRR: The LP and the debut EP were both put out by your label, Tucker?
Tucker: Yeah, the label is called Blind Spot Records and I have been putting out vinyl since 2004, which is right when I hooked up with Rick. Before that I put out CDs by bands that I was friends with.
Dan: The level of quality with Tucker's label is really high, I have noticed. The recording is really good. The places they go to get the product made, it's basically no different from a major label, just without the funding. There's no old guy with a boatload of money saying "Oh, I like them, give them a contract" and being a financial provider. We just don't have that.
Rick: None of this shit would have ever been possible if it wasn't for Opal Studios and Kevin Hahn. When Kevin first started his studio he didn't really have any punk bands trying to kick down the door, cause nobody knew he recorded punk music. As soon as he did, now everyone wants to record there. The Hellside Stranglers just did their new project there and it sounds really great.
Tucker: The PRF LP was recorded there.
Rick: Everything he does is great. You could be a shitty band and he would make you sound better-which sometimes isn't a good thing cause when people see you live they're like, "Fuck, these guys suck!" Kevin has done a lot for the music scene here and he doesn't even know it. He's like the Spot of the Portland scene.
Tucker: Kevin Hahn is to Blind Spot what Spot was to SST, or Don Zientara was to Discord records. If it weren't for him, my label wouldn't exist.

MRR: There seems to be some strong opinions generated when it comes to certain Blind Spot releases. What are your thoughts?
Tucker: I'm not gonna lie. I'm hated by a handful of people and bands, and that's fine by me. It's no fun to go through life without any enemies. But there must be at least 300 fans of my stuff because every release I've ever done is out of print.

MRR: I want to know who was behind the cover of the latest LP? It kind of reminds me of some of the stuff that the Big Boys did.

Tucker: That was me and Rick. We got really drunk and really stoned and we somehow made it over to the I-205 Target and were standing there for hours staring at the maternity magazines. And then we went to the checkout lines and here we were, two dudes with stacks of baby magazines.

Rick: It does have a message though. People are gonna look at the cover and say "Oh man these guys are perverts with all the pictures of babies on the cover!" Or people will think we are trying to be like the Butthole Surfers. But the meaning of it is that these kids are hearing a thousand mouths flapping their gums and shit talking and growing up like that.

MRR: What about the back cover? Whose yearbook is that from? Is that the girls' softball team or something?

Rick: That's from mine. It's the cheerleaders. In the 80s it was real slim pickins' when it came to girls in high school. You had pigtails and braces, the cute heavyset chick that was goth that listened to The Cure and The Smiths, or you had the preppie girls that would look at you and roll their eyes at you for wearing Doc Martens. Especially growing up in a small town like Independence, Oregon, I had to fight for what I believed in. You looked to get your ass kicked every day.

MRR: Tell me about it! I grew up in Kentucky during the 80s. There was probably like ten kids who were punk in your high school, otherwise you just hung out with the metal heads and other redneck outcasts.

Rick: People like me and you made it so kids can go to places like Hot Topic and buy a Bad Religion T-shirt.

Tucker: So I can blame you for Hot Topic? Fuck both of you guys!

MRR: So do you guys think that now punk is a bit more easily digestible than it was in the past?

Rick: Well it's a lot easier to find now for sure. We used to have to go and actually look for it.

MRR: Yeah, you had to go to the one record shop in the scary side of town that sold punk magazines and records and shirts. Or order it by mail.

Rick: You had to go get a magazine, read about a band, or go to a record store. Now everybody can just get anything off the internet. You don't have to work hard for punk anymore.

MRR: Is that good or bad?

Rick: It's great if you are in a band because you can get your music out there. It's bad though if you are just some young kid just getting into it and may just be easily influenced into anything you read about. I mean if you're in a band and want to get your stuff out there, shit like Myspace is fucking awesome. Although it was a lot of fun searching for punk stuff when I was a kid.

Tucker: Myspace is great for networking but on a local standpoint it has done things like making fliers obsolete. It has taken a lot of the footwork out of punk rock, which is a real shame.

Rick: But then again, if you are touring and have a date in Chicago and you break down in Wyoming, you can just jump online in a coffee shop and say, "Hey, our car is gonna take $500 bucks to fix so we are gonna have to cancel our show."

Tucker: Yeah, but technology in general is making humanity soft.

MRR: Back to your label, Tucker: you put out the *Choke on It* compilation, which I think is a really great documentation of a lot of lesser known bands and styles of punk from the Portland scene. It seems that locally you got quite a bit of flack for that album. Do you want to address that?

Tucker: Well, one band on side A of that record has a different perception of punk rock than all of the other bands on that album. They seem to think that their opinion is the only right one and they're going to silence the right to free speech of everyone else who has the courage to think differently or has the courage to crack a joke, or even smile.

MRR: So they decided to destroy copies of the record that they were on to protest the content of the rest of the album. Was that a slap in the face to you?

Tucker: It was to me at first, but looking back on it, having my record vandalized in Portland put me on the same pedestal as Lockjaw, who are one of my favorite hardcore bands.

MRR: And at places like 2nd Ave Records in Portland, they used to have their records broken in half on the shelves.

Tucker: They had their records vandalized and now Lockjaw records go for like $200 minimum on eBay. There's a reason that the compilation I released is out of print now. As the old saying goes, "Any publicity is good publicity."

MRR: Any final thoughts, any new stuff coming out soon?

Rick: I think the new songs we wrote with this lineup are sounding really good. I am in financial hell right now, but it would be great if we could have a 45 out by the end of the winter.

Tucker: It'll happen, I live at home. Wait until you hear the new lineup and the new songs. It'll level the forest! You can check us out online at myspace.com/thecrawlers. But really, fuck email! Write us a letter at Blind Spot Records, PO Box 40064, Portland, Oregon 97240. I love correspondence, trade and sharing music!

SURRENDER

I can distinctly remember Surrender's first show—they played a house in West Oakland sometime in the Spring of 2006. Their rudimentary demo tape was interesting and enough to get me out there to the East Bay to check out their set, but it did not prepare me for what I was about to witness. It was like watching a phoenix born, fully formed...burning into my mind the all-important reminder that punk rock still had unexplored frontiers. In the words of another band, "Still barriers to be broken, still rage to be screamed, minds to be upset, brains to be disarranged, still chords to be played, harmonies to be created and destroyed, still moments to be lived and to wish for." In the year and a half since then, the band has only gotten better...

Interview by Chris Hubbard, photos by Martin Sorrondeguy, Larry Wolfley, and Isabel Frienkel.

MRR: I'm kind of curious how you personally would define Surrender. I want you to describe the band and then the reasons you got started and how the band came into being.

Vocals: Do you mean define our sound? Or do you mean how we think of ourselves?

MRR: Well, for example, it would easy to describe Surrender as "a peace punk band," but I just want to know if you're trying to go for anything in particular or "just a band" or "a punk band" or something along those lines.

Vocals: I think that when we started we specifically wanted to be a peace punk band because it wasn't something that was happening and it was something that…it was wide-open to define.

Guitar: That's what appealed to me about peace punk as well. Even in the late '70s and early '80s, you know, none of those bands were really trying to do the same thing. Surely there were derivative bands, but if you listen to old records by Crass and bands on their label like D&V and Hit Parade and Sleeping Dogs, they were doing completely bizarre things that barely fit into the world of punk rock to begin with. The thing I've always liked about the genre was that it was completely undefined to some degree—you know, maybe politically and aesthetically

defined, but musically really, really open.

Drums: Also, besides most of my favorite bands fitting loosely into that category, I thought it was a really awesome intersection of art and punk that doesn't always happen.

Bass: They started the band before I joined. And when they said they were starting a peace punk band, the first thing that came to mind was, "That's great, because these political times need peace punk." I was really surprised that there weren't more bands out there that were, you know, talking about peace. It seems obvious. And I still can't believe there aren't more out there.

MRR: How much concern was given to originality? You mentioned the idea of being derivative. Were you trying to have a certain aesthetic—such as Crass Records, for example—or were you specifically *not* trying to do that?

Drums: I feel like we used that as a jumping-off point, but we have not really been constricted by it. And I don't think our aesthetic lines up very well with any of the pre-established stuff in that genre. We just used it as an inspirational starting-point, and the openness of the genre also allowed us to go in many directions, whether it was with the images that we've used, or the sound, or whatever.

Guitar: There are a lot of different things in each of our backgrounds that came together to make something new. I mean, I'm from Boston, and it's a different scene, very different people. I spent a lot of time playing in noise bands, being involved in that scene. So, I had a lot of different things in my back-

ground. I'll just speak for myself, but I think at the beginning I probably wanted to sound a lot more like Crass than we do—we failed at that, but we created something different. People will frequently compare us to Crass, and I think it's wildly inaccurate. But since Crass is such a well-known band, it's also an easy comparison for people to make. And on some level I *wish* we sounded more like Crass 'cause they're *so good*, but we just don't.

Vocals: On our US tour, I think the funniest quote we heard was "I heard y'all were weirder than Crass." And I was like, "Wow, no." [Laughs] We have to try so much harder to be weirder than Crass.

Guitar: They are *so weird!*

Vocals: We are pretty much a rock band by comparison; we are way more in the vein of punk and of rock.

MRR: You mentioned how not a lot of bands talk about politics or peace. Where do you fit into the scene here in the Bay Area? Do you feel like you're part of a scene? Are there other bands around that you're in alignment with, or not?

Bass: I was actually just thinking about this recently. The answer is both yes and no. There aren't really any other bands that are like us, and in that sense it feels a little bit lonely, 'cause we don't have our own scene. But, actually, in reality, that frees us up to play with all kinds of different bands. We *don't* belong to a genre, so we can write whatever we want, and whenever we write a song, it's like, there's no rules. You know, whatever happens, happens.

Guitar: And definitely there are bands that we're friends with. We did a tour with Acts of Sedition that was a lot of fun, and it was interesting for us to be playing some hardcore shows. On some level we didn't fit in, and on some level I think it was refreshing both for us and probably for the audience to have a different mix of bands. There are definitely scattered bands throughout the country that we mesh with at least ideologically. And, you know, as far inspiration, I feel really excited about Red Herring from Portland. I have a friend who has a band from Boston called War of Words that's very much inspired by the British peace punk scene, the early '80s. So that definitely exists, but not on a level where I'd say we're part of a cohesive scene, for better or for worse.

Drums: I think we're in this weird spot because most the bands that are playing political music are playing hardcore, and most of the bands that sound more like us or that we end up playing with a lot of the time aren't specifically political bands and don't talk about the same kind of issues that we talk about, but maybe they're doing the same thing in a different way. And it's really weird, 'cause we ended up on all these shows with bands that maybe sound totally different or are working on totally different ideologies. Sometimes it's really fun and sometimes it's really challenging if you're totally out of your element.

Guitar: Yeah, political punk bands only seem to play crust or D-beat at this point. And we've had some great shows like that. We played with Behind Enemy Lines in Pittsburgh. You know, I think that style of political crust was also influenced by bands like Conflict, but that's the direction it's gone in. And other bands from that same scene have inspired fewer offspring.

Vocals: There's a lot of political folk. We're kind of caught in an in-between territory. There's not a lot of mid-tempo political bands—it's either really quiet, defiant music,

or it's really loud and intense crust music. You know, I feel like there are few bands that reside in our territory. But there are, they exist. And we want to know about them.

Guitar: I do think that's a natural progression in art in general. Like—after something is created, for it to move towards extremes. So it's moved towards the extreme of fast and heavy, and it's moved towards the extreme of folk punk or whatever it is.

MRR: OK, I feel like this is kind of like an unfair question, so don't feel too bad about it… [Laughter] How much is politics just an aesthetic choice for the band, and how much would you say you "walk the walk"? If there was a spectrum going from totally apolitical, "we just wanna write good music or make art," to "we're totally political and this band is just the vehicle for that," where do you think you'd fall?

Drums: We talked about this before. I brought it up a long time ago, "What are we doing? Is it OK that we're writing all this super political music?" It's totally honest, and totally inspired by the things we're thinking about the world. But is that hypocritical in essence, that we're just writing songs about it? Our guitarist said, "No, it's not. That's what we're doing. It's expression." And also, we wanted to make a point of having it *not* be hardcore, having it be music that's a little easier for people to get interested in. We also wanted it to be poetry, instead of being dogmatic; we wanted it to just be intriguing in a way that makes you want to understand politics. I think that does have power—and on the other side of it, I don't think we are being hypocritical because in various ways we are involved in the community and politics. I mean, I think

we do stuff that follows those ideals too.

Vocals: A big part of it is we don't make absolute judgments about lifestyle. I mean, we're not a band that tells you the right way to live; we want to talk about how our choices affect other people and the world, and about how slogans and sloganeering are just as—even if they're for the right causes—are just as harmful as the ones that we're against. As far as walking the walk, I guess sometimes I do some sloganeering because it's easy. I probably distill things down to their basic elements because it's easy in the moment and I do that. But I feel that as a band, because we haven't made these statements that everyone in the world has to be an "organic vegan Earth Mother," we don't all have to be that ourselves. It's all about trying to find out what works for you, and what is sustainable for you as an individual. We're still figuring that out, and I think it's important to be constantly reevaluating that and your relation to others.

Guitar: I have a lot of internal conflict in myself about politics and about how I live my life, between the desire to go all out and fight the cops in the streets and blow up buildings, and the desire to pursue personal happiness to some degree and to try to live a life that's some kind of harmonious balance between my needs and the needs of the world. So then when I'm writing lyrics, I try to express that. Bands whose lyrics I've always really appreciated have been the ones that acknowledge that kind of internal conflict and who tried to explicate their own thought-processes in the songs. So by virtue of that, in our lyrics, we ask a lot of questions instead of simply making statements. The goal being getting people think about their own lives. I think that in punk rock there are a lot of statements, and it's really easy not to contemplate statements. So I choose to ask questions, and if people's answers to those questions are different than mine, then that's fine. I'm not looking for a specific answer. I just want people to think about where they're coming from and why they're doing what they're doing. Because I do that all the time, and I frequently feel conflicted about my own choices. You know, I quit smoking but I still drink beer produced by Anheuser-Busch and other multi-national corporations, and I acknowledge that it's very, very difficult to live completely outside of that world. And some people *do* do it. I have met people like that and I admire them greatly, but I also refuse to judge too harshly people who are in some ways constricted by the system, because in this country, in this world, it's incredibly difficult to escape from that. I try to reflect that thought-process in our songs.

Bass: I'd like to think that we 100% walk the walk that we talk because, as others here have stated, we don't lay down some rules that you have to live by. That's not to say that we don't also express really specific opinions in our songs, because we have songs about sexism, about religion, and we *do* hate sexism, and we *do* hate religion. In certain cases, you can make absolute statements. Some things are just plain obvious, you know? And other things, you need to question and talk about.

Vocals: Even the obvious things are complicated. [Laughs] Like, "What *is* religious oppression? What *is* sexism?"

Bass: How do they manifest themselves?

Vocals: Exactly. How do we support them?

Guitar: By saying that we reject religion, I should make it clear that I don't think we reject people's right to their own spirituality.

Drums: And we don't reject spirituality… [Laughs]

Vocals: Not always.

Guitar: …but merely the organized forms that create what we perceive as oppression. I don't wanna speak for "Bass" over here. [Laughs] That's my take on it. And I think it's safe to say that we all disagree about certain aspects of these things, and that's fine. That's important.

Bass: But also in response to your statement preceding your question...

Guitar: You're very concerned with *responding* to the questions... [Laughs]

Bass: I don't think that any band should take offense at being asked that question. I think that every band *should* be asked if they "walk the walk." There are a lot of bands that run around saying shit that you're just like, "Do you really believe that or do you just think that sounded really cool in the song?" Because it *does* matter. What you're saying to people in your music matters, and people should take it seriously.

MRR: Well, the reason I phrased it that way is because it sort of implies either one or the other, and I didn't want to make it seem like you had to be one or the other.

Drums: I don't really think there is that much of a division between bands that are just interested in making good music and making art, and bands that have a political message, because the act of playing music and being with other people and having an ecstatic situation like that, where everyone is kind of releasing and sharing and talking, *is* political, no matter what. If you say the actual words, that makes it more explicit, but that doesn't mean that bands that don't do that aren't political...even if they deny it.

Guitar: There's certainly an important aspect of the whole thing, which is just the thrill of punk rock, the catharsis of screaming, whatever that is. I believe very firmly in love and positivity, and I love to get on stage and scream and express total hatred toward politicians and policemen and whoever else. There's definitely room for that dichotomy for me.

MRR: Why don't you talk about some of the specific activities with which you're involved in the community? I'm curious—and I'm sure people reading this would be curious—what type of things a band could do, or people in the band could do?

Drums: I started going to law school this year. Hopefully I'll come out of it with some skills for working toward a more fair society. I don't know exactly what kind of work I want to do yet, but it'll either have to do with helping people get equal access to legal

resources, or helping people with criminal charges. There are a lot of organizations out there, especially in the Bay Area, that are doing really good work, and they need legal help from people who aren't just in it for the money. Also, I recently started volunteering at this place that provides all kinds of services to homeless people in the Tenderloin area of San Francisco, and I've been really impressed with the way that the organization functions and the way that the volunteers and the clients get to know each other. There are all different kinds of services. People can use computers or they can use phones, they can receive mail there, or they can get help applying for different kinds of state help or aid. But just the dynamics that develop are really interesting because it's bringing people into contact that would not normally have those kinds of conversations. You know, that would normally just interact as strangers on the street. That's been pretty cool.

Guitar: For myself, I live—this is true for "Drums" as well—I live in a very poor, pretty under-served part of Oakland, and I've been involved with various things there. There's a community garden there that has... There are a number of gardens in the neighborhood, actually, and they have a compost pick-up route on weekends and one or two days of the week. They have young people from the neighborhood helping out, and they sell the produce from the garden on a sliding scale, and they give it away for free if people can't pay for it. I think that it's doing something really important in the neighborhood where, really, literally, the only businesses within a 20-block radius are liquor stores. There's no healthy food. And involving myself in that community just by interacting with my neighbors, like being part of the community, I think, is really important in a place where people who are underprivileged in all kinds of ways and really pretty politically ignored by the city and by the state and by the country. You know, 100 yards away from my front door at the end of the block there's a huge new condo complex going up, which will have all kinds of effect on the neighborhood, most of which I perceive to be negative effects. We just were talking to one of my neighbors about helping out this old woman who needs help getting to church on Sundays. Just being part of your community and knowing your neighbors and involving yourself in that way is a really important, base-level step.

Bass: I live in a very privileged, over-served community in North Berkeley. [Laughter] I don't know, I'm not involved in any sort of

activities like that. I'm very involved in the punk rock community, which is important in its own way. It's very important to me and that's why I'm involved in it. I also have a job, and I feel like my own justification for my contribution is trying to be a non-consumer. I'm very conscious of what I buy, and I try not to buy anything, and I'm an asshole about recycling. At work, I rifle through people's trash. I feel like it's not the one thing that's gonna save the world, but it is very, very important that every single person is conscious of what they consume. That's an easy thing to spread, too. I feel like people should be conscious of themselves, and it's then pretty easy to affect the people around you, your family or whatever. It's like, "Hey, let's have a composting bucket right here, and I'll take it to the community garden." It's pretty simple, so that's my not-very-exciting answer to that question. [Laughs]

Vocals: My involvement in the community is also really based around the punk community. I work at a collectively organized, volunteer-run music and performance venue that also has non-band events. We're trying to have more community events. That's our big goal for this year, to reach out to our immediate community and have things going on that are not based entirely around punk, or that have activities where punks involved but that are not based on music, that are trying to do community building, itself. Beçause it's a collective, it is sometimes very hard and frustrating. [Laughs] But I think it was one of the best lessons that I've had in life—learning how to work with 50 people when none of them sees eye to eye. Or some of you do some of the time, but everyone has really disparate ideas about what the space should be like and who it should serve, and—without having a real power structure in place—everybody coming to agree about things. If you get good at talking to other people in a way that's respectful, and you can argue in a way and make it so that everyone in the end is happy with what's happening in the space, that's something that you can take to any other part of your life. And I think it sets you up for living with other people in a really comfortable and fair way.

Bass: I want to add that in my community, in North Berkeley, goes, we do live in a very well-to-do, in any punk sense of the word, neighborhood in North Berkeley. We live in a punk house and we get a good deal on rent. We're sort of the opposite of Drummer and Guitarist's neighborhood, as we're the poor people in the nice neighborhood, the people who are bringing down the property values, and yet we still have very good relations with our neighbors, and we have a very tight-knit community, and that's very much what Surrender is about, a matter of communicating with people who do not necessarily live or think like yourself. Trying not only to communicate with them, but to actually live amongst them and interact with them.

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Guitar: I think a lot of people, because of the music that we play and the aesthetic that have, immediately assume that we're all hardcore anarchists. People refer to us as "anarcho-punk" a lot. It happens. [Laughs] I'm not gonna say that I'm *not* an anarchist, but I don't identify myself in that way. I don't have any word for my political views, and I don't feel tied to any party line. I think that anarchism is a party line on some level. So, I don't know if people are expecting all sorts of "Black Bloc this-or-that" answer to this question. I don't do that sort of thing. As I said before, I often feel torn about these things, and half of me *does* want to be a militant anarchist and wants to fight in the streets. I don't do that, and there have been times when I did have a hardline feeling that any violence of any kind is totally wrong. At this point in my life, I feel like I've re-thought that in some ways, and I maybe don't feel that way anymore. And again I think that's a reflection of the fact that we're four individuals, and just because I re-think that, doesn't mean that other people in the band have re-thought that. If we're going to express that, we're going to express it clearly, that we're all on different pages, if we are, whatever. It's entirely possible. I've totally lost my track. [Laughs]

MRR: So... "Guitar," why don't you tell us what your experience was living in an anarchist communal living situation?

Guitar: I'm not sure that that's what happened. [Laughs] OK, after I dropped out of college, I moved to the country and lived with some people in a house in the middle of nowhere. It was an interesting experience, and I don't think that it was any more collective or communal or anarchistic than the way I live now in the city. But it was a very different experience. And I think there is some segments of the progressive, radical community that talk about "going back to the land" or removing themselves from society. My experience of it was that it was—creatively—incredibly productive. We played a great deal of music, and this was another situation in which I felt I was making music in a really collective environment. Personally though, for me, as a human, I felt that it was unproductive. I didn't feel like I moved forward, and, frankly, I was very bored. [Laughter] Again, I think it's a situation that works for some people. That might be a really progressive, productive place to go for some people, but I didn't work for me. I grew up and I was raised in cities my whole life, and that's

where I feel at home. That's where I feel like I can live life the way I want to live it.

Vocals: "Back to the land" equals boring. [Laughs]

Guitar: No shit.

MRR: Alright, glancing over some of your lyrics, I see allusions to revolution and a downfall of our current social structure, and I'd like to know what you feel about that—if you're working towards "revolution" or if it's even something you want to happen in the first place. Do you think we should try and just start everything over again, or should we try and work to change things slowly?

Vocals: I'm speaking for myself, but I think it's inevitable. Clearly, a change in our system is inevitable, but I would prefer it in my lifetime or maybe in the next couple years. I've come to be really used to the way things are, and I don't necessarily think that that's a good thing. I see it in myself everyday, that I've gotten really used to this system, and parts of me are getting really used to the way I'm living, and I don't think that that's necessarily healthy. And even farther past that, I would like to see the way we structure society change altogether. I don't think a regime change would be the answer. I think that the way that we think about power, the whole world would have to change for me to be happy, and I don't know how possible it is for me to affect that. I know that it's also not my place to choose what that world looks like and, if the world doesn't want to change, I don't want to be the one telling everyone that they have to live a certain way, because then that wouldn't be freedom.

Guitar: That's the reason that revolution turns so often into dictatorship. You're imposing your values and your belief system on an enormous group of people. And, as we've talked about, we as a band have different ideas, so surely the population of the world has very different ideas about how things should be.

Drums: We don't want to promote these reductionist ideas of something that might look like a revolution that's not really going to get us where we want to be. I think if we did have a revolution, things might end up being a lot worse. The way to get to the goals that we promote—which are health and equality and the freedom to have the necessities of life as well as to have the freedom of expression and to realize your full potential as a human for everybody—why don't we just work on those goals and start acting like the world belongs to us as a community now? And creating a positive community and creating opportunities for as many people as we can to realize those goals.

Vocals: Also, our view of freedom is probably way different from the *American* view of freedom, which is like, "the assurance that I will be able to buy whatever I want. I can trash whatever I want because I'm free to do so. I have these privileges." Freedom is privilege to a lot of people. But I think that getting your basic needs met so that you can live a bit better and not struggle not so hard everyday is a bit of freedom…

Drums: Freedom from poverty.

Vocals. Freedom from poverty. But it comes with a personal responsibility and acknowledgment of the people around you, an acknowledgment that you are living in the world. That is an equal part to freedom for me.

Bass: Bouncing off of what "Drums" just said, we say in one of our songs, "What if we acted like we already won?" It's about not waiting for the revolution. Waiting for the revolution seems to be the career of a lot of people involved in politics, and I don't think that they know what they would do if they won, because it would totally eliminate their *raison d'etre*. So, for us, it's a matter of actually thinking about what does your ideal world look like, and do you really have an excuse not to be living in that world? Of course, there are a lot of reasons not to, but there are also many artificial constructs that you feel hold you back that maybe necessarily don't. How's that for vaguery? [Laughs]

WHATS MOST IMPORTANT IS JUST
TO HAVE PEOPLE THINKING
ABOUT THEMSELVES AND ABOUT THEIR LIVES
CONSIDERING HOW IT ALL FITS TOGETHER...
NOT JUST MAKING OR ACCEPTING
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BUT RECONSIDERING ALL THE TIME

Guitar: The notion of a glorious revolution—I'll just speak for myself—to me, it's incredibly appealing. I just think there's so many problems with the way people think about it. I really do believe that violence begets violence, and that a violent revolution will create a violent regime. It's so hard to conceive of a "revolution" that just results in pure freedom and equality. So I guess, for me, it's all about living in the tension between the desire for that ultimate revolution and that ultimate world of freedom and equality, and the realities of everyday life and the notion that that might be really hard or be impossible. We have to do the best we can within the bounds of the world that we live in.

MRR: Even before I started thinking about questions for this interview, this line—from the song "What If?"—stuck out to me: "And I ask nothing from the state." Do you actually believe that, or are you happy for some of the privilege that you have from living in this society?

Guitar: Before I answer that last part of the question, I will say that I'm glad that you asked about something that stands out, that one thing that you can *hear*. We spoke earlier

about political crust and D-beat, and one thing we as a band talked about was the desire for the lyrics to be audible, because I always think it's pretty hilarious to have intensely political punk rock that you just can't understand anything that they're saying. So I'm glad you can understand what we're saying.

MRR: Well, why don't you just talk about that song in general?

Guitar: Sure. We're dealing with these endless dichotomies between the fact that I was born into a society that was governed by a government that—obviously, we don't choose that. In some ways, I would rather live a life where I dealt with everything for myself and wasn't subject to the regulations of the government and their whim, basically. And I have never asked them to rule me. At the same time, it's true, I'm on food stamps, and I'm sure that there are other ways in which I benefit directly from the government's involvement, even apart from living in the privileged nation that is the United States, just inside my community. I've had conversations with people about police involvement in the community and how they protect us and help us, but I don't see a lot of that in my community. I see a lot of bullshit from the police, and I don't see them involving themselves positively in my community. In the context of the song, basically what I'm getting at—you know, it says, "I derive no joy from hate and I ask nothing from the state, but still they take my money and take my life. There's only one way to survive"—it's basically that, whether I chose it or not, I'm inside this system and I don't choose to involve myself with the government, but my income is taxed. There are all sorts of ways in which my life and behavior is subject to their regulation. So when I say, "There's only one way to survive," what I mean is that I do, on some level, walk a path within the system in my day-to-day life. And one of the things the song is about is acknowledging that fact, that we *are* inside the system and that at the same time, nurturing the hope within ourselves and the feeling inside ourselves that we can surmount that and overcome that and live a full life and a free life and a life that we dictate for ourselves.

MRR: But do you think the state has nothing to offer? To me, it would be hard to argue that the state doesn't provide benefits as well—and clearly it doesn't provide those benefits equally—but are some of those things worth the negative aspects? In other words, is there something that the state can provide that you can't have without the it?

Drums: I think that gets into really tricky territory because one of the most important things that the state does is counter non-democratic political organizations like big corporations and nobody can fight them because they own everything, and they are extremely corrupt, and they have really specific goals that don't always take into account the well-being of the majority of the humans that live on this planet. So, in one way, the state is one of the only things—I mean, there are a lot of things that people can do—but it's kind of our gorilla in our corner that we can at least have laws that are going to regulate corporations. But then you get into free trade agreements and stuff where non-democratic organizations are superceding the power of the so-called "democratic" governments, so maybe the state is useless. We don't know.

Bass: What about the fire department?

Vocals: There are volunteer fire departments in small towns in which they work cooperatively.

Bass: What about water treatment plants? Power, you know...

Drums: What about schools?

Vocals: I don't know, let's try. Let's see if we can work all of these things without the state.

Guitar: Public school is an interesting thing to bring up. I went to public school, and I believe very firmly in the notion that the community should educate together. I also had a miserable time in public school, and I think that most public schools are in a really bad situation *because* of the state, because the state doesn't make them a priority. And again, we're using this term, "the state," and I think there's some distinction to be made between "The State" with a capital S, as a concept, and the current government of the United States. Those are two different notions. So these questions can go in very different directions when addressing those two divergent paths.

Bass: I think that there are things like the fire department, sewers, and whatnot, that—whether you call it "The State" or not—you have to have everybody sacrificing something to a common pool that provides the resources for these services to happen so that everybody can have them, and that's one excellent function of a government. Whether you want to call it anarcho-syndicalism or just a community getting together and doing something, it's still people with differing ideas creating some kind of a system to have a society that operates under some sort of common goal. So, the state can grow to an evil monster or the state can be your friend, depending on which way you look at it.

Guitar: I think part of the problem, at least in this country, is that this country is just too large. "Vocals" touched on the idea of a volunteer fire department, and that does work in small towns. I think that part of the problem

is that when you're dealing with a country that's so large and a bureaucracy that's so extensive—one unit that's trying to control such a large number of people in such a large area—I just think it becomes unwieldy to a point of impossibility. The smaller, community model is fairly essential for equality and everything that we're talking about.

Bass: But if there were greater power given to smaller community governments in places like the South, then you would have the Ku Klux Klan running certain counties in Georgia. I think that there's something to be said for big government in that sense where everybody over this huge territory, you know, the majority of people think it's wrong to do these things that maybe people in certain smaller areas think are cool, but fuck 'em. [Laughs]

Drums: You could say that about us just as easily. They don't want gay marriage. If our community had its way, come on, we would totally have that already.

Guitar: These are the difficulties of living in a community and in a world...

Bass: These are the difficulties of being in this band.

Guitar: People fundamentally disagree. There's however many billions of people in the world—6 or 7 billion people in the world—and there's no chance that everyone will agree. Ideally, there would be some way to bring people together and have everyone decide together in a calm and friendly way about what will be most beneficial to people.

Drums: Or at least if not calm and friendly, in a mutually respectful way, where you can yell at each other, I don't care, but you've got to keep respecting each other and realizing that you're not necessarily just in it to win it. You're in it to make sure that we can all get along.

Guitar: And I think that that can be tied back to the notion of the state in a way where the less the people in power respect the people that they govern, the less that those people respect one another and respect the state. Mutual respect is difficult, but is really important, and without that respect from above, there will be no respect at all, I think.

Bass: I think it percolates from below. No, I'm being serious...

Guitar: No, I'm not saying I think it *needs* to come from above. I'm saying that if the people in power don't respect the people that they govern, then no one will respect each other. I think that everyone needs to have respect. I think that part of the problem is that

power inherently creates a situation in which those in power feel as if they don't need to respect anyone else because they have this nominal thing called power.

Bass: What are we going to do with this power that we have now that we have these pages of *Maximum Rocknroll* dedicated to our beliefs? [Laughs]

Guitar: Fundamentally, I think that what the song symbolizes is the fact that these choices and these thought processes are very difficult. It's very difficult to reconcile ourselves with the world. That's what we as individuals and as a band struggle with, and what we're trying to express. For me what's most important is just to have people thinking about themselves and about their lives, considering how it all fits together—not just making or accepting dogmatic statements, but reconsidering all the time.

MRR: The other song I wanted to ask about was a related song. In the lyrics to "What Now," there's the line "Make you weak with punk rock records and high school regrets / Why weren't it that way then, how do we make it that way now? / White leftist guilt and self-reflection, that's the real cash cow." What were you trying to express there?

Drums: Our own ambivalence about what we're doing.

Bass: I like that line a lot. I didn't write it. I don't know what "Guitarist" was thinking when he wrote that, but it definitely resonated with me, in that punk rock is, in many ways, just another consumer culture that keeps us placated. And I kinda like being placated. I love my records, I love punk rock, it makes me happy, and there's nothing wrong with that. It's also something to think about, that this is maybe yet another thing that keeps you complacent in a world where you really need to be taking more action and trying to change things more.

Guitar: Both "What If" and "What Now," as the names imply, are asking questions. I don't necessarily have answers for myself, or for anybody else. It's about asking these questions of yourself and contemplating. Saying, "what if punk rock is just one more distraction from the real issues of the world?" The line about white leftist guilt and so forth, I'm talking about…all sorts of things, but stuff along the lines of Michael Moore's films, as ostensibly progressive political things. But also, those exist as another consumer prod-

uct, as another way, maybe, for people to alleviate their guilt about the way they live their lives. "I like Michael Moore, I watch his movies, so I'm a good person." Just to contemplate how that fits in to the worlds of entertainment and consumerism.

Vocals: A lot of punk—not our level of punk per se, but punk on the mainstream standard—makes a lot of money selling teenage rebellion and the idea of revolution without an actual revolution behind it, because it's safe. Look at... I only heard bits and pieces of it from different parts of the radio, but Green Day's *American Idiot* is supposed to be a political record. And it's not, it's the most apolitical thing to me. It's a heart-hand grenade, like they're really going to destroy the state while they're living high on the hog. I think that kind of thing is really dangerous. It's all in name only, as a product—and what does that do to our half of punk? The one that is kind of flipping the bird at mainstream "punk," but they've co-opted the idea of revolution as a marketable thing. It's so fucked.

MRR: OK, so with a band like Green Day, do you think they should *not* sing about politics at all, or is there a way that you think a band can achieve success and "live high on the hog" and still contribute something positive?

Vocals: Probably. I haven't seen it yet. I think one would bring up Chumbawumba, but the thing is, people don't take it very seriously in a pop music forum. That's a really hard decision. If it affects some people, and some people are really inspired by it, is it worth it to kind of trivialize this revolution, have it become some kind of fashionable thing? I think it hurts it more than it helps get the message out. I think a lot of bands will use that, as "we wanted to speak to more people, a bigger audience, to get our message out," and use that as an excuse to...I don't wanna say sell out, because I don't think that's even a conversation to be had anymore. But doing things that are not within their ethics, their original ethics, because they feel like it's a good sacrifice to make, to get their message out, when they undermine themselves doing so. It's a toss-up, and I don't think so.

Guitar: I'll preface this by saying that I love Chumbawumba. I love the song "Tubthumper," I own the 12" single. But I don't think that the ten million people or whatever around the world who bought that album then went back and bought the first Chumbawumba album. I think it was on some kind of *Jock Jams* compilation and everyone wanted to party. It's unclear to me how effective that is. At the same time, I think there's probably a lot of kids who bought a Green Day or Offspring record and that led them into what we're gonna call "real

punk" or underground punk. I'm not gonna deny the notion that that was probably a gateway for some people. I do think that the major label record industry is completely soulless and destructive to the music world. Steve Albini has an amazing essay that breaks down a major label record contract for a smaller band, dollar by dollar and moment by moment, and describes the way in which it's just completely destructive and completely takes advantage of the band. I do think that marketing revolution as pop is destructive.

MRR: A lot of times, when I've seen Surrender, you wear—for lack of a better word—costumes, sometimes stuff covering your faces, and in this interview you've chosen to remain semi-anonymous. How come?

Vocals: On the dress, the idea of masks first, I think that we all were talking about the band and bounced a lot of ideas off of each other. We all chose separately that being masked and being anonymous was a good idea for this band. As far as my personal idea, it had a lot to do about being a frontwoman of a band and being kind of vulnerable to—I don't even know what the word for it is—being made into an icon against your will. Being sexualized, and being made the visual representation of a band. The way to deal with that is to deflect it, have there be nothing to look at. There's a costume in place, and you have no idea what the actual person looks like. Therefore, trying to deflect some of that power the audience has over performers. Setting up this dynamic that I feel most women don't have, which is, "I can see you but you can't see me." On the street, you're constantly being looked at by men, being the object of a gaze. In this way, being on stage and being in the center of a performance but not being able to be completely looked at, that was the ting I was really interested in.

Guitar: As far as not using our names goes, my idea is that it doesn't matter who we are. What I want is for people to listen to what we have to *say*. I think, as much as anyone might not want it to be true, in punk rock there's still stars, rock stars, a cult of personality. It's about individuals and who they are. The individual and individual accomplishments are important, but for me, right now, in this context, it's not important who I am, it's important what I'm saying. That's what I want people to focus on.

Bass: The costumes and the banner, for me, are actually something of a stage show. I think, sometimes, bands who perform are a little too "whatever" about it—"I'm just wearing whatever shirt I had on, and here's some songs, here you go." To us, it's really

important—and I'm not saying it's not important to other bands—and it sort of demonstrates how we've thought about what we're doing and saying and what we're presenting. Also, I hope it's kind of cool-looking. Part of the really awesome aspect of being at a show is being entertained by the band. If it was something that was meant to be something less of a performance, then we'd be, "cool, man, here's some bongos, if anybody wants to play whatever, come on up." It's us presenting our art to the people.

Guitar: I think that's a really good point and a really honest answer. This is, on some level, entertainment. That's what music is, to some degree it has to be. I think there are too many bands and too many shows and so much going on, that you need to put more into it to make it important again.

MRR: You mentioned going on tour. I know you did a pretty long…was it six weeks?

Guitar: Six weeks.

MRR: You did a six-week tour pretty early in your career as a band. I was wondering how that went, how you were able to make that happen, both financially and in terms of getting such a large trip organized. Especially considering the conventional wisdom that a band establishes itself, puts out a record, that record gets purchased and listened to, and the band sells that record on tour to make money for gas and so forth. I don't think you had a record out at that time. How did that work?

Drums: I just made a zine about DIY touring and I'm gonna send it to *MRR* so people can get a copy if they want one, but I totally think you don't need to establish a band before you go on tour. You don't need a record. We made tons of merch. We made CD-Rs and spray-painted them, they looked really nice. We put the effort into making our merch look good, at least look presented, not like we were just throwing it at people. We had t-shirts, we had all different kinds of stuff to sell, and we all had been on tour a lot so we had friends all over the place who we could just call up and get a pretty good show, at least get a show where we could get a little bit of gas money. It helps if you're established, and it helps a lot if you're on a label that's gonna do a lot of the legwork for you. But if you wanna go on

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tour, no one needs to hear your band. Chances are, even if you are established, wherever you're going, people haven't heard of you yet. It was funny, because our guitarist actually had his wallet stolen the night before we left. We did OK. We made the gas money, we sold the merch. We were in a minivan that could get decent mileage. We had enough money to buy food and share it. We cooked together. We didn't eat fast food every day. We shared the resources to make the most of them. I don't know if it's a given, but we didn't stay in hotels or anything. We did actually have a really bad van accident.

Guitar: We did stay in a motel that night.

Drums: [Laughing] OK, we stayed in a motel after flipping our van. There's no reason to not go on tour because you don't think you're established enough, you don't have a record yet, or you're not on a label yet, if you're just going on tour to have fun.

Vocals: To add on to that, we had tons of merch, but sold it all for donation. So to also put an emphasis on the fact that when you're on tour, you're pretty much at the hands of your community and the people that you know. We made more money on that tour, relying on what people judged they were able to give, then I ever have before. It was great to be like, "you want these things but you don't have a whole lot of money, it doesn't matter, there's no set prices." It was the best feeling, to work it that way. Also, I felt, while selling merch, I interacted with people in a totally different way, having everything for donation. Merch then became a vehicle for talking to people a lot about the band, whereas usually, it's "price, thing, money. I take thing, I go away." That was really neat. As for the length of the tour, it was a really long time, it felt like a long time. I'll go ahead and say that not only are we in a band together, we are all really close friends, and we all care about each other a lot. I think that made for a different touring experience. It was really exciting to be going on vacation with my best friends for a month and a half. And also playing in our band that I care about. That was one of the best six weeks ever.

Guitar: There were definitely moments where I felt like it wasn't working that well, and moments where I felt like we were speaking to people who hadn't heard what we had to say before. That meant a lot to me. I feel that at a certain point in the punk rock world, it's pretty much a "heard it all before" kind of thing. We had some experiences, like Russelville, Arkansas, to name one, in which we were dealing with people who were on a completely different world.

Drums: But they were open to dialog. They wanted to talk to us, and they wanted us to talk to them about it.

MRR: Do you want to just give a brief overview of this Arkansas situation?

Guitar: Sure. The first band that played the

show, I don't know if it's the first song they played, but they had a song called "Emo Fag," the lyrics to which were "Emo fag, you're gonna die, all you fags are gonna die." I'll just speak for myself, but I was reasonably upset by this. When they were done, I took the microphone and told them I wasn't comfortable with that and that I thought that was a really inappropriate thing to express. The result was basically a pretty intense confrontation between us and the local kids, who were young. It was a pretty young scene. There was a lot of shouting, a lot of people getting in each other's faces. In the end, I think "Drums" is right, man, it was really positive.

Drums: They watched us play. They said they really liked it, and they bought a bunch of stuff.

Guitar: People, I think naturally, reacted really defensively to being criticized for their views.

Vocals: Not even their views, to them it wasn't even about having a view, it was "this is what we said, why does that have to *mean* anything?" I don't even think that they felt they were defending views, they were just like "don't harsh my mellow."

Guitar: I think that was the initial reaction, and as we expressed our view about it, like "Drums" said, they were really open to dialog. After the confrontation kind of died down, we played, and I think we played pretty intensely, because I think we were pretty pissed off. Outside, I was talking to these kids, and they wanted to talk more. "Why do you feel that way, why wasn't that OK?" Ultimately, when we got home, a month later, I felt like that was the most productive night of the tour. We maybe got someone think about something they hadn't thought about before. That, to me, is the ultimate end, what is really productive.

MRR: My last question was going to be "are you a pessimistic band?"—some of the content of your lyrics seems sort of defeated or bleak, and of course there's the band name—but after doing this interview I feel like there's a lot of optimism in this band, so...

Vocals: I'd like to address the band name for a second. And this is another thing where we all have our own take on it. For me, there's so much rhetoric around, "never surrender, always fight," like there is some kind of shame around surrendering, and about giving up fighting. But ultimately, that's what peace is. Can we not fight? Can we stop? If all of the militaries of the world disintegrated right now in a surrender, that would be an affront to their "manhood" or their ideals. Seriously! Things are thought of in a really masculine way. You are emasculated in an act of surrender. It is thought of as a really feminine thing. It's referred to as a sexual thing as well, in terms of surrender. I feel like we took that name as complicating that issue. And because peace is surrender, it is the cessation of fighting. There's nothing wrong with surrendering.

Guitar: I've had conversations with people who have wildly differing views of what different lines or songs mean. That's great. I'm not gonna tell anybody what it means. Ultimately, when we put something out in the world, after we put it out there, it is what it is. People will take it how they take it, that's up to them, and that's how I want it to be. The notion of surrendering, I don't know. In response to questions people ask me about the song "Surrender," which has a lot of really ambiguous lines in it. I wrote a piece that we sometimes do live between songs, and the words are, "One last dream of peace, our lives, our whole lives from birth until the final surrender, the only surrender / One last dream of peace in a world that knows only war / Perhaps one day we shall awake and the dream will be reality." To me, that is talking about what I mean when I say "Surrender." If it means something else to someone else, great. If someone interprets it as being defeatist, that's in their mind, not mine. I do have hope, always.

Bass: My favorite interpretation of the name Surrender is in the way our vocalist said people use it. It's used a lot by the Republicans, calling the Democrats the "Defeat-ocrats" or whatever. "Oh, you wanna *surrender*?"

Vocals: "Cheese-eating surrender monkeys" is all over the place, referring to Democrats.

Bass: [Sarcastically] "You wanna give up in Iraq? You wanna surrender?" It's like, goddamn, you're so fucking stupid—yes. To me, it's a really sarcastic name, like, yes, *fine*, we want to surrender. That's how you wanna put it, *fine*. Just shut up.

Guitar: Let's put in that I also hate the Democrats.

MRR: Is there anything you'd like to say about anything coming up in the future?

Drums: We're repressing the 7". We're pretty much out now. We are going to record a full-length 12" record this year.

Vocals: There's also a live tape idea percolating, so if that happens, look out for it.

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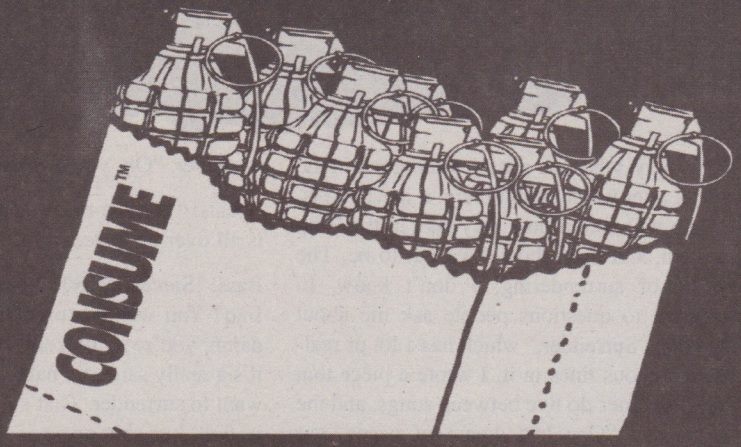

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2:20

2:20 is a melodic hardcore band from Oslo, Norway. They were interviewed by Christin Malen. Singer Tor Idar wasn't there.

Ok, lets start with a quick intro. Who are you and how did you get together?

STEFAN: Well it was the end of me and Møkks former band, BØYEN BENG, and we were talking about starting a new band, playing traditional Norwegian Punk. This must have been during the summer of 2004. We met Dyret at an ASTA KASK show at Blitz. We were all pretty drunk and I guess we thought we had a great idea about this band. This might have seemed like one of those drunken shit-talk good ideas at the time, but we decided to do something about it.

MØKK: I was also pretty hammered at the FROM ASHES RISE show at our famous venue in Oslo, Blitz, when I pitched the idea to Audun and Tor Idar. We were all stoked and one day we just decided to get in the rehearsal-room and try. It seemed to work out pretty good and we made the first three songs in one rehearsal. The first song was really meant for our previous band at that time, BØYEN BENG, but we used it for the song *Tidlig Grav*, which means *early grave* in Norwegian. We had recorded it but never released it. But we often play it live though.

STEFAN: We were working pretty hard in the beginning. We wrote six songs right away and played our first gig only two months after our first rehearsal. We were supposed to play our first gig at Barrikaden. The night before, we were at a show at Blitz drinking and dancing and we just decided that we should play there that night. So we played a show the night before our *first show* without being on the poster or anything. We rehearse in Møkks studio, so we have always recorded stuff to remember it for later. We recorded all the songs we did.

AUDUN: So we played some shows with DRUNK before they stopped playing and then Dyret went on his yearly retreat to Nicaragua like he does every year. Stefan went over to visit and they sat down to work on a couple of new songs down there that winter.

STEFAN: I remember we had to get a guitar from somewhere, so we went to a small shop near where we stayed in Nicaragua. They had some really crappy guitars there, and in the end we just had to point at the one that looked to be the least shitty. The old woman behind the counter didn't understand shit so Dyret just had to shout *Rock n roll, rock n roll!!* for her to understand what we wanted. It had nylon strings and all... *he he*. We wrote a couple of songs down there.

AUDUN: 2:20 is kind of a part time project because Dyret always goes to Nicaragua when the winter comes to Norway, and when he is down there, we don't really do much without him. Sometimes we try to mix some songs and stuff like that, but we always end up recording them all over again when he comes back and the sun starts shining again. This is how our 12" came to life. And we sure are glad we recorded the songs over again after a winter break. We did our five songs plus three new ones, like *Håp*, *En tryggere hverdag* and *Gjør det sjøl*, which we put on the record and feel pretty good about that one.

Who plays what and who have played in what bands?

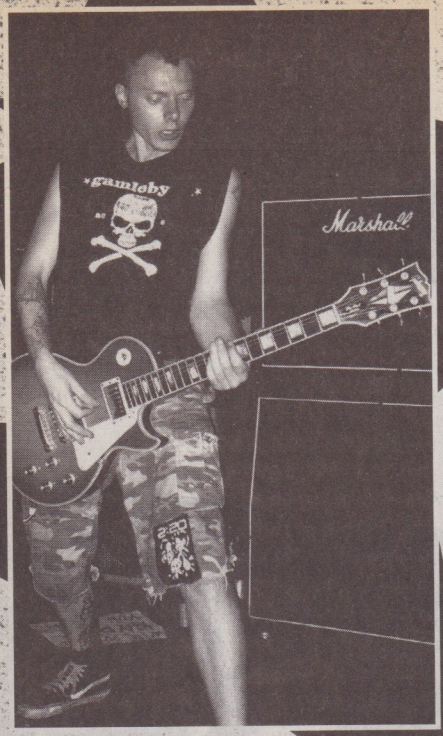
AUDUN: I'm Audun, I play the bass and I used to play in DEAD GERHARDSENS.

STEFAN: I'm Stefan and play guitar. I have also played in bands such as the Norwegian folk-punk band BØYEN BENG, BLÅ HEDER and SURE OPPSTØT. We did TWISTED SISTER covers with the last band mentioned...*he he*.

MØKK: I also play guitar and also used to play in BØYEN BENG. I used to play in bands like KORRUPTE OPPKASTERE and MORTE CELEBRALE. I'm the sound-geek in the band and I record everything in my studio, where we also rehearse.

DYRET: Yeah this is a guy who mixes his own guitar higher and higher. It sound louder and louder if you listen to the different mixes *ha ha*. But he is a good guy to have in the band when it comes to equipment and recordings. Anyway, I'm Dyret. I play drums and I used to play for bands like LIFE...BUT HOW TO LIVE IT?, HJERTESVIKT AS, BLINDT HAT and CAPTAIN NOT RESPONSIBLE.

AUDUN: On vocals we have Tor Idar who is in Trondheim at the moment, playing a reunion show with his old band SEKUNDA MANNSVERK, with the legendary SVARTEDAUEN. He also played in CAPTAIN NOT RESPONSIBLE, DATA MORGANA and HUSKER IKKE. Both Tor Idar and Dyret have probably played in a hundred other bands than



the ones mentioned here, they have been active in the whole punk/hardcore movement since the early-'80s.

Lets talk about lyrics. Who writes them and do you all agree with everything?

MØKK: Tor Idar writes about all kinds of stuff: everything from making beer to international politics. And everything in between. His lyrics are good, and it's something we can all stand for because they are not about being right or wrong, but they are very subjective and open for discussion.

Who writes the songs and how do you put them to life?

AUDUN: Stefan is the riff-master.

MØKK: Yeah Stefan has a framework and we just puzzle around and play with it. We sometimes have to *boo* out certain riffs, but I guess it's a democratic way of doing it all. Everyone contributes in their way.

So you have a whole song about making you own beer. Are you just bragging about being so DIY that you make your own drinks too?

STEFAN: *He-he*, Tor Idar is an expert when it comes to making beer.

MØKK: Yeah it tastes really, *really* good too! The lyrics is not exactly taking it step by step in detail, but it's about the process in making beer without revealing the secrets Tor Idar has for his own special beer. So it's really a song about everyday DIY

Where have you played and what are your future plans?

MØKK: We've played a lot in Oslo at Blitz and other venues. We have been playing some shows in North and Eastern Germany as well as Denmark and around in Norway.

AUDUN: We are going up north this fall to play Tromsø and Bodø which will be cool.

MØKK: There is a lot of stuff going on in the Oslo area these days with the police and landowners throwing out people from squats and such, so there's going to be a benefit concert for our friends who are being thrown out of their own homes in October at Blitz. They received a 46,000 kroner fine, which is like 8500 dollars. Makes it even harder for people finding a new home now too, so it's pretty stupid.

Where were the best shows then?

AUDUN: Køpi was cool. It wasn't that packed but it was great for being a Monday night. People were singing and pogoing around and it ruled. Lobusch in Hamburg was great too

STEFAN: Night of May 1st was also pretty great at Blitz. It always is.

MØKK: Trondheim was awesome. Even if all i remember is a naked dude stagediving all night and a girl flashing her tits. It was crazy *he-he*.

Did you play with any good bands in Germany? What's the hottest *shaiz* in Europe right now?

AUDUN: I.O.U was great, *he-he*. A Norwegian band who were on tour at the same time as us. LA FRACTION is great too.

STEFAN: LEATHERFACE is the best band in Europe right now. And JUGGLING JUGULARS are good too.

How have you been received in Norway?

MØKK: Better than expected! Smaller places like Moss have been cool to play but Oslo is where people support us the most. People were singing along even long before our first recordings were out and that's pretty cool.

AUDUN: I think it's easier for younger kids in the punk scene to like us because our lyrics are in Norwegian. I mean, how would RAGA ROCKERS (one of the highest-selling Norwegian rock bands) be with half bad English lyrics? It's definitely a plus doing it in Norwegian.

What about other Norwegian bands, any names worth mention?

AUDUN: LA CASA FANTOM is pretty good. HEVN and RAGING FUGITIVES are pretty new bands from Oslo who are doing pretty good.

MØKK: Well there's a reason why LA CASA FANTOM only have bass and drums. I was supposed to play guitar with them, but I never showed up at rehearsals, so one day they just played gigs without even telling me *ha ha*.

AUDUN: I.O.U is good. CRUORIS and SUMMON THE CROWS are cool. And we should mention that there are a lot more younger bands now than a couple of years ago, so that's really cool. There are a lot of young punks getting recruited over here, so that's really great.

What about politics? How are you as a band when it comes to politics?

AUDUN: We have a lot of political songs. *Heksejakt*, *God Natt til Alle Barna* and *Tryggere Hverdag* for example. *Heksejakt* which means *Witch hunt*, is about the west after 9/11. It's about surveillance and paranoia—important issues. *God Natt Til Alle Barna*, which means *Good Night To All The Children* is about environmental issues and the fact that a lot of people say they care, but all it comes to are there's really not that many people who are willing to sacrifice anything at all for the kids' sake. It's about the fact that people like riding safe and not caring enough about important things. *Tryggere Hverdag* means *A Safer Everyday* and is about the Norwegian police that wants to get the right to carry weapons on duty. It might sound strange for American readers that the police over here don't get to wear weapons all the time. Anyways, it should not be an issue for the police in Norway, because they have already proven that they don't need weapons to kill innocent people.

MØKK: I think it's about that the police are put out

there to protect people from terrorists and what not, but they only use their new laws to give harder prison-sentences to political activists, for example. I think that a lot of this terrorist hype is created to build an enemy, so that people are more often worried of *them* then realize that our civil rights and freedoms are shrinking. And who will protect us from those who are supposed to protect us?

Give the readers a fast course in Norwegian hardcore and punk for dummies.

STEFAN: Well the thing about the Norwegian hardcore and punk is that we are just a small country, but have been very productive when it comes to music. Ever since the early '80s a lot of bands have been working hard and touring a lot, all over the world. Norwegian

hardcore/punk have created a genre of their own just like Norwegian black metal, a sign of quality in a way.

AUDUN: There were bands like SVART FRAMTID, KAFKA PROSESS, SO MUCH HATE, LIFE...BUT HOW TO LIVE IT?, and so many others and they all played a lot of shows outside of Norway. This is a tradition we are trying to keep alive.

MØKK: If you look at Sweden, they have a lot of huge punk and hardcore bands who have grown big all over the world. It's a big country and if you compare us to them, we are just a small town. That's one of our strong cards I think.

DYRET: We don't get all the different subscenes under the subgenre of punk. I'm sure that is something that have made us stronger. Sweden is big, but we are stronger and sticking together. Not that segregated in smaller genres but gathered around the same cause.

S: Bands here in Norway haven't been selling out to get bigger, but standing against that shit. Holding on to what is ours.

D: Blitz has been a real important place for the Norwegian third wave of punk. Most of these bands came from the environment around Blitz and there was a lot of good stuff going on at Blitz around that time.

AUDUN: I remember going to two shows that were really good a week. Blitz was seen on as one of the coolest places to play in Europe, which gave us a lot of great shows and the chance to see some incredible bands from outside of Norway. There was a lot going on music-wise and politics in Oslo. Bands like FUGAZI and LEATHERFACE played around 1990. TURBONEGRO played every 23rd of December and even YOUTH OF TODAY played Blitz.

DYRET: Yeah it was a huge variety of bands and genres and it was a place where bands wanted to play. A place people wanted to show that they belonged to. Like when FUGAZI were going to play in Oslo in 1993. The band had grown so big that Blitz as a venue was way too small for them, so they needed to play somewhere bigger. They actually demanded that people from Blitz did the show even if it was in a commercial club. It was quite special, seeing the punks that did the show working together with the beefy stage guards that were put out there.

Tell a story from one of your tours.

STEFAN: Well we could tell you about that car we rented to go on tour in Germany the last time.

AUDUN: *Ha ha*, yeah it broke down just outside of Hamburg and we had two concerts left of the tour and there we were, with a car that

didn't work anymore and full backline. We got some dude to get the car in to Hamburg and we had four different mechanics to look at it. They all said it was dead.

MØKK: Yeah we found a lot of new friends with cars in those days. And we got two cars to drive us to the next town the next day so we could play our show.

AUDUN: And we had to get to the ferry that next day at nine in the morning. It was a Sunday morning. So we had to pay this lady to drive us five hours to the ferry with all of our backline and all. She earned a lot more on that tour than we did *he-he*.

So, Stefan, your hair...What's up with that? Dreadlocks?

DYRET: He likes to think he's a pop artist, you know. He is always up on stage in the front, rocking out. Trying to get some attention from the ladies you know, while all they are doing is trying to get a peek at the handsome drummer in the back. It's a late youth riot. Delayed big time.

STEFAN: Yeah you know, my mom stopped caring about my hair, so now I'm just trying to upset my woman at home *he-he*. No, I actually just took off my cap one day and found that I had so much hair. It was getting longer, so my neighbor weaved me some dreadlocks.

AUDUN: Well we have all had our share of hair. We have all had a green mohawk. It's just something everyone should have tried.

Is age an issue to you? I mean, there's quite a leap between the oldest and the youngest one in the band.

MØKK: *Ha ha*, well to say it like it is, the youngest one in the band is 25 and the oldest is 42. So Tor Idar could be Stefan's dad you know.

Do you have kids and families?

STEFAN: Well, there is an age difference there, but we are all living the same kind of life. We have, together, nine kids so that's a lot of kids around, which is kind of why we don't have the time to just go on tour whenever.

AUDUN: My daughter turned out to be a punk girl. Luckily she's smart enough to know when to shut up and not tell me what's going on so she won't get in trouble at home. She's good at keeping her secrets *he-he*.

DYRET: My son also got into punk, but then he started dealing with hip hop. He does tattoos and both he and I tattooed Stefan once. I think he did better than me. That's actually on the cover on our first record. He's not that much younger than Møkk and he is learning to tattoo while Stefan's kids are learning to crawl around on the floor.

Sounds like you are a huge family the whole bunch?

AUDUN: Yeah it will be interesting to see in a few generations what the punks here look like. Probably like 11 fingers and 3 ears because of all the inbreeding *he-he*.

DYRET: It does seem like my kids seek other kids with punked-up parents. Seems like they feel safer with people who have been growing up the same way as them selves instead of some posh, rich-kid parents in their Mercedes Benz. It's pretty interesting.

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the JONESES

Given the present resurgence in trashy glam-punk, the influence of Los Angeles' The Joneses on this current scene cannot be emphasized enough. The Joneses—they shoulda been huge! Too "punk" for the rock crowd and too "rock" for the punk crowd, the band looked back to Johnny Thunders and classic rockabilly stylings at a time when Southern California punk was dominated by raging hardcore aggression. The band first played in December 1981, aiming for a sound that would be "a cross between the New York Dolls and Eddie Cochran."

Making their vinyl debut in 1982 on the classic BYO Records compilation Someone Got Their Head Kicked In, *The Joneses stuck out like a sore thumb alongside the likes of The Adolescents, Social Distortion, Youth Brigade, and Battalion of Saints. And although it met with great resistance from many of the punks of the day, "Pill Box" was one of the strongest and most memorable songs on the record. The Joneses would soon go on to do the* Criminals *EP (American Standard, 1982) and contribute two tracks to the* Hell Comes to Your House Part II *compilation (Enigma, 1982). The band would later make a name for themselves as a live attraction in mid-'80s Hollywood. Sadly, a full-length debut* Keeping Up with The Joneses *(Dr. Dream, 1986) failed to sell due to a distribution fiasco, and has been an out-of-print rarity for over 20 years. But that changed this summer, as Full Breach Kicks reissued the album and put this glam-punk classic back into circulation. This was be the second Joneses reissue on the label—last year they reissued the* Tits and Champagne *12-inch EP (Trigon Records, 1989).*

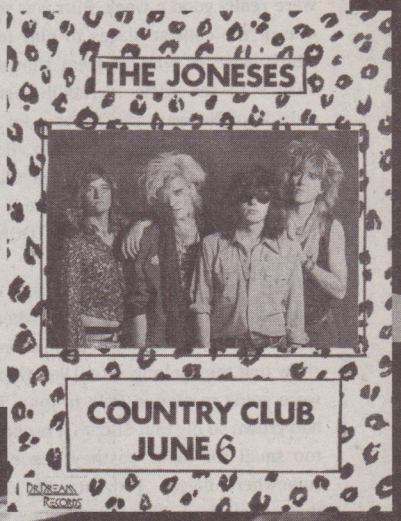
The Joneses were an interesting and ever-changing cast of characters, the only constant being singer/guitarist Jeff Drake (and to a lesser extent, piano player Greg Kuehn). Ron Emery (TSOL), Paul "Mars" Black (Mau-Mau, LA Guns), Scott Franklin (The Cramps), and skateboarding icon Steve Olson (an original member) were among the notables who played in the band at one time or another. Notorious for heroin addiction, excessive boozing, and the general pursuit of self-destruction, The Joneses lived the lifestyle to the hilt. But even as bands from the same time and place were signing to major labels and rising to fame doing lowest common denominator imitations of The Joneses' act, Drake and Co. continued to draw from raunchy '50s R&B, earthy outlaw country, and the libidinous swagger of the New York Dolls. Historically speaking, The Joneses bridged the gap between the heyday of Johnny Thunders and the late-'90s/early-'00s trash-rock 'n' roll-punk revival. Listening to current Joneses labelmates like The Soda Pop Kids, The Black Beauties, and Chaz Matthews, you can't help but hear the similarities.

Since he permanently stopped doing The Joneses sometime in the mid-'90s, Drake has played in Amanda Jones and The Vice Principals (with his brother Scott). However, we have not seen the last of the band. To celebrate the reissue of Keeping Up with The Joneses, *Drake planned a Joneses reunion for some shows this summer. In June 2007, on the eve of the reissue, I spoke to Drake about the history of The Joneses, his own past, and his band's resurgent popularity.*

Interview by Lord Rutledge, June 2007

MRR: What are you up to these days? How's life treating you at the moment?

I'm currently a senior at



CSULA, should have my BA by this time next year. After that, I hope to go to grad school and get my Ph.D. I can't wait to make everyone call me Dr., and believe me, I will. Life is pretty good right now. I'm just living the life of a humble university student and trying to resurrect my musical career.

MRR: So I hear you're going to be playing some gigs in conjunction with the reissue. What are your feelings about getting back on stage as The Joneses and rockin' out live again? Do you have any expectations about what the experience will be like?

Well, to tell you the truth, I'm apprehensive. It's been almost ten years since I've done that, so I hope I remember how. I mean, I was in Amanda Jones and the Vice Principals after the Joneses, but I played different roles in those bands. My only expectations are that other people will have expectations, and I'm not sure what those are. I'm gonna do my best to get up there and make sure they leave glad that they came. I guess I'm just trying to be realistic. Whatever that means.

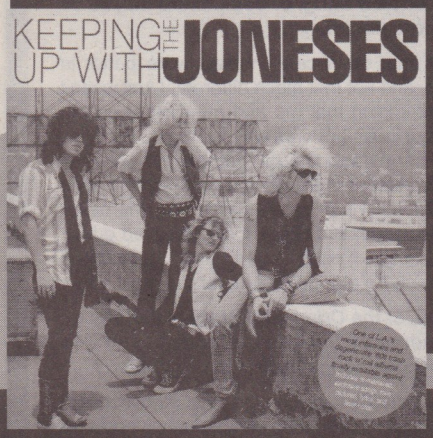
MRR: Talk a little bit about how The Joneses first came to be. Had you been in bands before The Joneses? How did you first get together with the rest of the band?

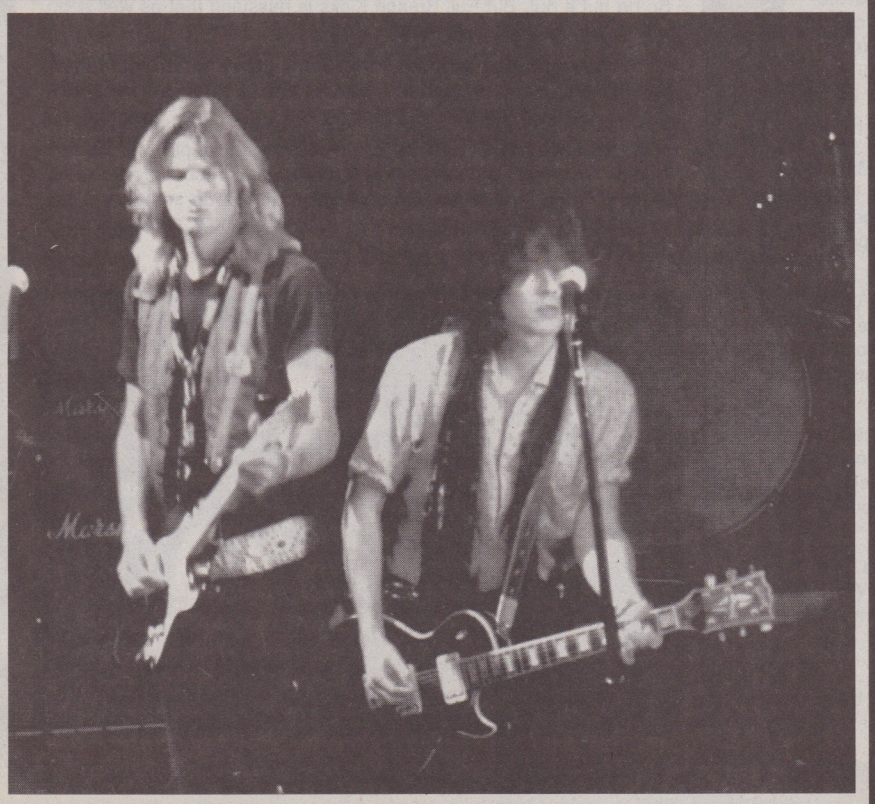
The story goes like this: I graduated from Merced High School and instead of going to college, moved down to LA (where I was originally from) to get in a band. I had only been playing guitar a short time and wasn't very good, so why I thought I could just move to LA and get something going was just youthful naiveté. The first week I was in LA, I met Steve Olson at the Cuckoo's Nest. He was in a rockabilly band that needed a guitar player, so I joined his band, The Aristocats. (The drummer was Joey Escalante who was later in the Vandals.) Steve and I had the same idea for a band—a mix between the New York Dolls and rockabilly. We quit The Aristocats 'cause it was too *Howdy Doody*, and Steve joined a band called the Rockaholics. He got me into that one, and then we were both fired cause we weren't *Howdy Doody* enough. Our pompadours were too big, I played with distortion on my guitar, and we partied a little too hard for the rockabilly scene. So we decided to start our own band. Steve came up with the name. He knew Mitch, and we were friends with Ron Emory from TSOL, and Ron wasn't happy with TSOL right at that point. Mitch knew a guy who had a couple of open dates. So we rehearsed for a couple of weeks, and our first two shows were opening for Missing Persons and The Dickies. About a week after that, we recorded our first EP. I was writing the songs, so I had to be the singer cause I knew all the words. It was just supposed to be until we found a real singer, but we never did. I never wanted to be a singer, but ended up doing it for a really long time.

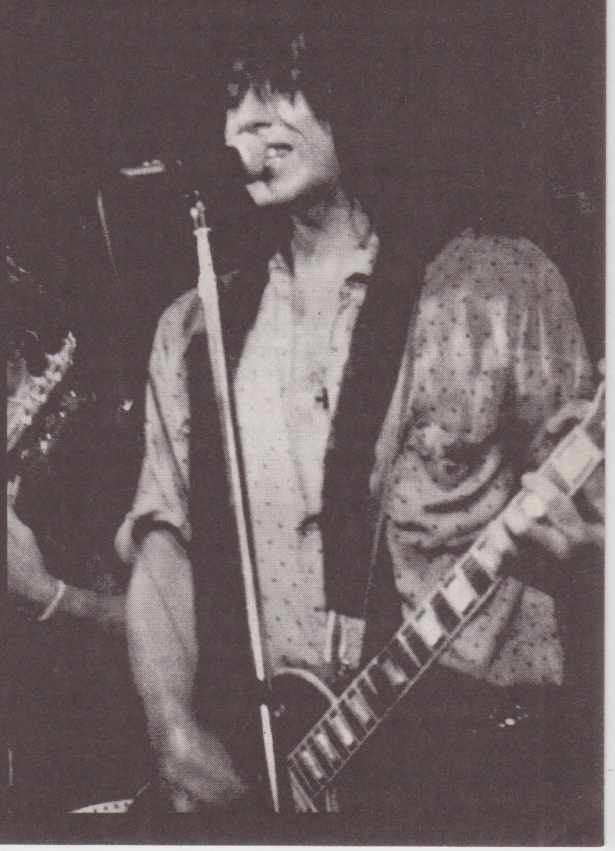
MRR: People are always curious about how your band wound up on the BYO comp *Someone Got Their Head Kicked In* with all of those SoCal hardcore punk groups. The rest of the album is your basic fast-and-loud thrash, and then in come The Joneses playing good old rock 'n' roll. How'd you get involved with that comp? Did you play shows with a lot of the bands on that comp?

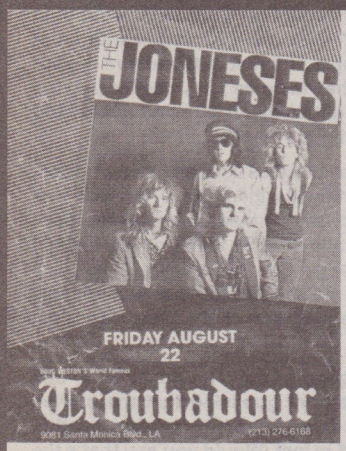
I think the Stern brothers contacted us through Steve Houston, who had replaced Ron Emory by then. Steve Houston was already a bit of a punk rock star by then 'cause he had been in Vicious Circle, the Klan, and AKA. So they probably thought we were just another Orange County hardcore band. One of the Stern brothers told me shortly after that record came out that we got more hate mail than all the other bands put together got fan mail.

MRR: The mythology/legend about The Joneses is one of decadence and danger. I'm guessing that the stories about the drugs, booze, sex, and overall craziness relating to The Joneses are based in fact. Would you say that's the









case? Did things in this band get pretty wild?

I don't know if I heard all the stories you have, but we weren't faking anything. It's pretty common knowledge that we had enormous drug problems. We kicked out Johnny Sage for being too strung out, and I remember a guy asking me how somebody could be too strung out to be in the Joneses. In retrospect, I guess it was pretty wild. We were just trying to have a good time. Eventually we got more known for our drug habits than anything else, and we scared all the labels away.

MRR: When *Keeping Up With The Joneses* was initially released, how did it do, in terms of sales and response? Did you guys ever see any money from it? Do you remember how people reacted to the record itself?

Keeping Up with the Joneses was a nightmare. Our drummer quit in the middle of the sessions, everybody was strung out, and the sessions were big parties. It got great initial reviews. But nobody could buy the record. We did a big record release party at the Whiskey in July 1986. Everybody in town was there, but there was no record. The label signed an exclusive distribution deal with a company that went out of business like a week later. Some law enforcement official put a lock on their warehouse, and so there our record sat for over a year. When the legal fur stopped flying, the band had broken up, and I had retired from music to become a full-time heroin addict. So at that time, I don't think anybody realized it was out there. I think I made about a hundred dollars off that record, if that much. Hopefully it will do better this time.

MRR: I remember when that "new" Joneses 7-inch came out back in the late '90s. It almost sounded like a total throwback to the early days of the band—more Johnny Thunders, less "rock." Would you say the same, or do you just perceive it as a rock 'n' roll record?

No, there were no intentional stylistics changes. I haven't listened to the stuff recently, so I'm not sure what you mean. To me, it all seems like a logical progression, but maybe I'm too close to it to be subjective about it. We recorded it very quickly, so maybe that's why it sounds that way.

MRR: There were certainly a large number of changes in The Joneses lineup over the years. What was the cause of this? Were there problems/personality conflicts? Or did you pretty much conceive of The Joneses as you and Greg and whoever else might have been backing you at the time?

There were lineup changes from the very beginning, and the band didn't have a stable lineup until the mid-1980s. And by that time, my heroin addiction was out of control. There were as many different reasons for the changes as there were changes: girls, drugs, egos, money, you name it. After a while, it became apparent that it was just me and whomever I was playing with. Greg was always there, but for a long time he wasn't a full time member and just recorded with the band. People think of the line up from the *Criminals* EP as *the* lineup, and others think of the *Keeping Up with The Joneses* lineup as *the* one. But when I think about it, it's me, Greg, Mike Sessa, Rocko, and probably Johnny Nation.

MRR: When did the Joneses officially break up? What precipitated the demise of the band?

The Joneses never really did break up, like couples do. I just stopped doing it and started doing something else. I was tired of doing that band, and it didn't seem to be getting anywhere. So I stopped. It wasn't until I stopped that people started noticing "Pill Box" and using words like "legendary." I felt like I was wasting my time and it wasn't getting me off musically anymore. So I started Amanda Jones, which was a much better band than the Joneses. All of I sudden I started writing songs that I thought were much better, the best I've written in fact, and I didn't have to sing anymore. I felt much more comfortable in that band. I'm surprised more people that like The Joneses don't like that band. Better songs, I was playing better guitar, had a better singer, and me and Greg produced it. To me it was a big improvement over what had come before it. I still feel that way.

MRR: The Vice Principals record totally rocked. How did this project come to be with you and your brother getting together to make a record? Was this a one-off thing, or could there maybe be another Vice Principals record someday?

Thanks for that. I also think that the Vice Principals were better in some ways than the Joneses, and not that much different. I just wasn't singing. I think it's pretty well known that me and my brother do not get along, and it's nobody's business but ours why we don't. The Vice Principals was supposed to be my solo record, but it didn't work out that way. I would be very surprised if there were ever any more Vice Principals records. In fact, I think I can safely say that it will never happen, at least not with that lineup. But check it out: I played guitar, sang back-ups, wrote some songs, Rocko played bass, Greg played piano, and I co-produced. I think it's a good record, for the most part.

MRR: What led to the release of the *Criminal History* anthology on Sympathy for the Record Industry? Did the label contact you with an interest in getting all of those songs back into circulation?

Actually, another label was gonna do it which was Junk Records. But when it came time to step up to the plate, they pleaded insolvency. So the deal fell apart. John Mermis heard about it and said he would pay. So he put it out. But Full Breach Kicks is reissuing that as well soon with more material and artwork.

MRR: Are you still writing songs and planning to make new music? Any plans to get a new band going or do a solo record?

I do want to do a real solo record, hopefully before too long. I have a lot of friends who can play great, and I've never gotten to play with them. I love doing covers, and I've always wanted to do a record of all covers. Me and Greg have talked about it, and I've lined up some people. I wanna do some duets with some girl singers I know, and I'm hoping this Joneses resurrection will make it easier.

NI CHÁVEZ! NI OPOSICIÓN!
¡QUE SE VAYAN TODOS!

VENEZUELA'S *EL LIBERTARIO*

Arguably the most widely distributed anarchist journal in Latin *Amerika* today, *El Libertario* newspaper from Venezuela has for over a decade now published their monthly journal without any interruptions or help from subsidies or sponsors. As governments have come and gone this anarchist publication has managed to survive and remain fiercely independent and defiant, becoming the only non-bourgeois voice of dissent in Hugo Chávez's Bolivarian Venezuela. We interview Rafael Uscategui, a member of the collective of *El Libertario*, to tell a little bit about the history of this great paper, anarchism in Venezuela and the current political situation in Caracas. Interview by LUCHO.

MRR: Hello Rafael, could you tell us how the idea of *El Libertario* was first conceived, and what were the circumstances under how you initially got involved with this project.

***El Libertario*: First of all I want to thank you in your interest in what we do here in Venezuela, and our views on what happens here in this country. We would also like to thank MRR for publishing this interview. *El Libertario* was born due to the climate of political mobilization and agitation that Venezuela lived under in 1989. At that moment we concentrated on the struggle for the resignation of President Carlos Andres Perez. At the beginning of the '90s, various anarchist initiatives existed in different cities of Venezuela, but for many reasons they ceased to exist at the end of 1994. In 1995 a group of comrades came together with the idea to reactivate the anti-authoritarian activism that had ceased to exist in Caracas, and to coordinate with the folks who used to participate in anarchist collectives in the past in Venezuela. This is how what we call the C.R.A. (Commission of Anarchist Relations) was born, with the idea to promote the federative ideal and to release anarchist propaganda. With that we retook the name of *El Libertario*, a newspaper that existed in Caracas in the mid '80s. I had already participated in a collective that printed a newspaper in the city of Barquisimiento. I had just moved to the capital around that time and I decided to incorporate myself to this group. With time the C.R.A. ended up becoming an affinity group.**

MRR: How does the collective work?

***El Libertario*: The C.R.A. functions with the values of any other anarchist collective in the rest of the world I guess, the decision-making process is done by horizontal assemblies. We of course do not tolerate any homophobia, sexism, or any other type of discrimination. We meet once a week and every single one of us is encouraged to propose their ideas at the assemblies for discussion and see how those ideas can be best conducted. All of us love doing *El Libertario*, and it's usually the first thing we discuss.**

MRR: How many people are involved in the collective and what other projects are they involved besides *El Libertario*? Is it true one of you members is a veteran from the Spanish civil war?

***El Libertario*: One of the characteristics of the C.R.A. is its diversity, the people that participate are from various ages, backgrounds and different walks of life. From people as young as 16 to people that are 87 years old. From students, professors, workers, ecologists, anarcho-syndicalists, feminists to those who are artists and punk rock kids. Sometimes, as you can imagine, it's hard to come to a consensus, but this plurality has enriched us as a group and has helped us grow as a people. We are an affinity group and aside form the ideological sympathies we all share, there is much love and respect for each other, which has helped us stay together for over a decade! In the C.R.A. there were two companeros that fought with the CNT in the Spanish civil war, but unfortunately one of them passed away from cancer three years ago leaving a huge hole in our group. The other one is a beautiful person of 87**

years of age whose name is Antonio Serrano, and despite his age he still participates very actively in all Libertario activities, an inspiration for us all for sure...in the C.R.A there's a total of twelve of us not including the many people that help us from time to time.

MRR: What are the principal objectives of the newspaper?

El Libertario: Well, through the paper, *El Libertario* tries to put forth the ideas and practices of the history of anarchism and what is happening in the world today. We also focus on the struggles of other anarchist communities, but with the specific emphasis on the social movements here in Venezuela and the rest of Latin America. We also try to promote news from other folks in Latin America who do not necessarily identify themselves as anarchists but do share a lot of the ideals we subscribe to: mutual aid, autonomy, self-management, etc. We also try to rediscover and investigate as much as possible of the little bits of history of Venezuelan anarchism. Through our practice of self-management we try to demonstrate that it is possible to function in an independent manner and be able to release a means of communication without monetary support from the state or private subsidies from corporations.

MRR: Does El Libertario try to target any specific demographic or people, or do you think in general the paper is a medium all types of people could read?

El Libertario: The diversity of the C.R.A. has made *El Libertario* a very pluralistic newspaper, with a diverse focus on our reality. We try not to see everything through a small window of anti-authoritarian thought. This is why some of our articles might interest students, while others could interest workers, feminists, or anarcho, punk rock kids who love our paper. We hope *El Libertario* can be read by any type of person, and even though we lack the resources we try to make the presentation and design of the newspaper very informative and very pleasant to read—and hopefully attractive to everyone.

MRR: What is the function of the C.R.A. and its relation with the paper?

El Libertario: The C.R.A. is the collective that edits and prints *El Libertario*. We are its "council of editorial staff." This does not mean that we are a paper that only prints what the collective thinks, but we also print articles from other anarchist groups and social movements. We always try to promote that the people who are confronting the problems daily in a country tell their story in their own words. So if we want to print an article about what's going on in Chile, we prefer that the companeros from Chile write the article. We try with *El Libertario* to use it as an instrument to keep adding to the networks of anarchist's struggles in Latin America.

I AM LEADER THAT DOESN'T BACK DOWN! OR LET HIMSELF BE INFLUENCED BY HIS FOLLOWERS! WE ARE IN NEED OF LOTS OF DISCIPLINE HERE! UNDISCIPLINE IS THE LEGACY OF ANARCHIST MOVEMENTS THAT HURT PEOPLE!

— Hugo Chávez at the swearing-in ceremony of agrarian coordinator Ezequiel Zamora. Teresa Carreno Theatre, April 5, 2003.

MRR: Rafael, regarding the past ten years, could you tell us the difficulties you guys have faced printing a radical newspaper in Latin America without any subsidies or sponsors?

El Libertario: During this time we have learned the different chapters on how to do a newspaper. I remember at first we started with just a few pages; we tried doing what we had read in other anarchist's journals. With time we evolved as a newspaper. We learned to write better articles and each of us learned how to design the paper. We were able to create a network of distribution and a community that felt responsible to keep this medium of counter-information going. As a group we have learned to confront problems we face daily, and come up with quick collective decisions. It's not easy—from small things like maintaining the website to buying our first computer and opening up our own social center. We have attained all of this through hard work and determination. It really has been an experience. We have made errors, learned from them, and have been able to move forward. Through much effort we have been able to complete small goals that we have learned a lot from, and hopefully that will help us reach bigger ones. This has been crucial to our self-esteem as a collective. The self-managed financing of *El Libertario* has always been the hardest task of the editorial process. As you can imagine doing a newspaper like this in Latin America is not very easy. For us, some of the hardest tasks in doing an anarchist newspaper are not repeating the same mistakes and weaknesses of a most of the anarchist press—that is, the sectarianism, the romanticism of the past, the language we use that could alienate people. We try to be different than other leftist forms of communication in the sense that we don't bring boring aesthetics or use empty slogans and pamphlet language. We attempt real journalism, and do not print half-truths or print lies about people to discredit them and demonstrate we are the good guys. We try doing all of this so people feel comfortable reading the paper and use language they can identify with.

MRR: Do you receive a lot of support from the local punk community?

El Libertario: We have an excellent relation with the local anarcho-punk community. We receive a lot of support form them and they are often doing activities with us. Whether it is a benefit show, releasing a record, or just giving us free material to sell, they are always looking for ways to help out.

MRR: How much censorship or repression from the state have you guys faced doing this newspaper?

El Libertario: Well, Lucho, as you may know, political activism in Latin America is always under the

fear of physical aggression, and in some cases, complete disappearance. In this situation one must work either in clandestine or be very visible. We have opted for the latter, choosing to be visible. We are always in contact with our friends around the world in case of state repression. We know that as well as other political groups here, the Venezuelan government has our names, pictures, and files in the police headquarters. We receive many threats from them, emails, and other types of intimidation, constantly, but none of this has discouraged us or stopped us from doing what we do.

MRR: Could you tell us a little bit about the current social, political situation in Venezuela and what is *El Libertario*'s position towards the so-called "revolutionary" government of Chávez?

El Libertario: It's a long and complex answer but I will try to explain our position as best I can. So-called democracy was established in Venezuela in 1958, after many years of military dictatorships. This democracy was reached through a pact between the principle heads of state of Venezuela at the time. The two main political parties agreed to alternate power every five years. Venezuela has always sat on enormous oil reserves, which profits these parties to create a vast base of support. During the '80s, in the midst of a great economic crisis, the political system began to crumble, and one of its uglier moments was the lootings and riots of February 1989. Also known as el Caracazo, more than 1,000 people were slaughtered in the streets of Caracas by the army. Right after this various sectors of Venezuela began to mobilize demanding social change. This is around the time we first got together and began to organize. In 1992, two attempts at military coups were unsuccessful. The first of these was led by none other than Hugo Chávez. Two years later, after amnesty was granted for him, Hugo Chávez was freed and he began his own political movement. Chávez was able to capitalize on the massive demands for social change and thirst for freedom from the overwhelming majority of the Venezuelan society, eventually winning the victory in the elections held in late '98. We would like to stress that the social movement that began in the mid '80s, and started at the proverbial bottom, was a grassroots movement and was thirsty for real change and freedom. The movement that started with the people and had many political expressions could only be institutionalized and co-opted for the state by a demagogue figure like Hugo Chávez. And today, seven years after he came to power, the social movement has been unfortunately, strategically disarticulated. Hugo Chávez claims to be an anti-imperialist and his speeches are reminiscent of those movements for Latin American national liberation from the '60s, his actual economic politics only favor the most dynamic sectors of global capitalism, banks, finances, telecommunications and (especially) the huge, energy multi-nationals. This government, contrary to his state propaganda, has reversed the process of nationalizing the oil industry that began in the '70s. He has made endless deals managing to give away more natural resources to foreign companies than any other president since 1930. Our criticism on that subject doesn't limit itself to the role our country has been assigned by the global economy—the guaranteed sales and trusty, cheap energy—but to the idea of deepening an industrial miner-model still in development, which its principal industry, oil, generates massive contamination and has serious social impacts. One of our most important fundamental critiques of the Chávez regime is that, since 1999, when he began to govern seven years ago, his regime still has not reduced the extremely high incidence of poverty, or reform the corrupt power structure that still resides in Venezuela. His revolutionary propaganda focuses a lot on the programs called misiones, and some of them are actually okay and somewhat successful, but none of them attack the structural roots of poverty and only represent a small percentage of the large profits that flow into the country by way of the high prices of petroleum. The old elite and the new Bolivarian bureaucracy benefit from the massive profits of Venezuela's natural resources. We as anarchists refuse the militarization of the Venezuelan society that has been imposed on us, that expresses itself among other things with the military presence everywhere in the country as well as in all high government posts. Military promotion and ascension are viewed as models for good conduct to follow and aspire to. Interesting things happen to certain base groups that support President Chávez, dynamics that don't cease to be interesting, but are capitalized and institutionalized by a government that loves to promote the cult of personality. *El Libertario* has denounced many times these and many other contradictions of the so-called Bolivarian revolution. We have also fought against the old political parties from the past, and the reactionary economic sectors that used to govern this country and now are not in power. In a country with polarized political positions, with manufactured confrontation that are maintained by different heads of power, we have opted for an uncomfortable but suitable position that we think can best be reflected in a phrase written by Albert Camus: Ni victimas! Ni verdugos!" (Neither victims! Nor executioners!).

MRR: I remember when I was down in Caracas a couple years ago for the jornadas, I got the impression that at least a minor sector of the anarchist community supported the current government, or at least what is called the Bolivarian process. Could you explain this?

El Libertario: Hugo Chávez has massive, blind support of the large proletariat class of Venezuela. There are anarchists who may think it is possible to take advantage of some of the revolutionary spirit this group now feels That it can be infiltrated, and eventually anarchist discourse can be inserted and practiced from the inside. But by doing this they silence the criticism and contradictions of the government, and fall in the same blackmail of having polarized politics that says anybody who doesn't support our government is a "puppet of imperialism," which is an old Stalinist argument. Unfortunately, it's not the first time anarchists have had an unclear political posture towards the Latin American populist phenomenon. During the '40s some anarchist groups in Argentina assumed a similar stance during the

times of Juan Domingo Peron. With time, they lost all the things that characterized them as anarchists and ended up as part of the blinded heterogeneous mass known as Peronismo. *El Libertario* believes that capitalism and poverty are the principal problems in Venezuela, and that we must work with the most marginalized and those less favored by the distribution of wealth, but we will never be silenced now or ever by the contradictions of a so-called revolutionary government or any other state or bureaucracy of power.

MRR: In January 2006 Caracas was the host of the World Social Forum. You guys organized a counter forum parallel to it. Could you tell us what was the initiative behind it and any positive/constructive experiences from the alternative forum that you recall?

El Libertario: The Alternative Social Forum (A.S.F) tried to serve as a double response. On one side it was a response to the institutionalization of the World Social Forum, a meeting that has gradually degraded and is currently headed by the most reformist sector that speaks about the humanization of capitalism and marginalizes the most radical political stances. Secondly, due to the complete control by the Venezuelan government in the organization of this event, there was a real need to create a space where more autonomous social movements could meet and offer different visions of the situation going on in Venezuela. The Alternative Social Forum was organized by ten different social organizations of different political ideologies, and was organized in a total independent manner. The objective of offering a critical leftist vision of Venezuela I think was completed successfully, but also the other objective was to create a space were local autonomous social movements could come together and build on what we still are working on. *El Libertario* also took advantage of the Alternative Social Forum by having an international anarchist gathering where we got together with companeros from 13 different countries and continued to add to the global anti-authoritarian network. We also completed the first Libertarian Declaration of Caracas. You can visit our website where one can find more information and there are texts in English. www.fsa.contrapoder.org.ve/english.htm.

MRR: Could you tell us about other projects *El Libertario* has been involved in or supports, or any other activities it has organized in the past?

El Libertario: *El Libertario* has been involved in many campaigns and demonstrations including a very important one that occurred on the 26 of September, 2000, which was the first anti-globalization demonstration in our country. We have also been involved in campaigns with the indigenous people of Temon, for the protection of their land, and also campaigns for the indigenous community of Sierra de Perija and the exploitation of their coal. We also are deeply involved in the struggle against the F.T.A.A. and their initiatives that integrate the South American infrastructure. We also organize jornadas of Libertarian culture; also, we support the center of counter culture and Libertarian studies la libertaria in Biscucuy. We also support the Organization Nelson Garrido (O.N.G.) of Caracas. We along with other people self-manage our own web space called Contrapoder.

MRR: Tell us a little bit about the center for anarchist social studies you guys opened Centro de Estudios Sociales Libertarios, and what has been the response from the community in that neighborhood?

El Libertario: The center for Libertarian studies is a learning center where everyone is welcomed to come by. It is located in the heart of the city in a working class neighborhood and it opened its doors November 2004. We have a popular library that focuses on popular social movements and struggles, counterculture, and is open to the public four days a week. We carry more than 3000 books and more than 6000 zines and magazines from all over the world. We have activities here and also do our weekly assemblies. The social center is located in the neighborhood of Sarria and it's the only library in the neighborhood. The response from the neighborhood has been positive; many kids stop by and adolescents come to do their homework.

MRR: How does the distribution of *El Libertario* work? What other countries can people find the newspaper?

El Libertario El Libertario is distributed in over twelve countries across Latin America: countries like Peru, Colombia, Ecuador, Dominican Republic, Chile, etc. We also have distribution in European countries such as Spain, France, and Germany. With a lot of patience over the years we have been able to build a loyal network of distribution and an international community that feels responsible for the well being of the paper. We receive a lot of support form the international anarchist community. If anybody in the U$ is interested in distributing our paper, please feel free to do so by emailing us at ellibertario@nodo50.org.

MRR: I heard about the possibilities of members of El Libertario maybe doing an east coast tour of the U.S. and Canada? And also how much contact do you have with the anarchist community here in the U.S. and what are your expectations coming here?

El Libertario: Some compañeros from Canada gracefully invited us to the Anarchist Bookfair of Montreal, and even though they sent the plane tickets to us, the Canadian Embassy of Canada denied our visa. So it looks like for now we will have to postpone our trip there and mini-tour of the north. But, we look forward to heading up there on some other occasion. We have had some communication with anarchists in North America, from traditional anarchist groups to green anarchists (Earth First! and Green Anarchy) to anarchists that work in alternative mediums of communication like IndyMedia. Ever since the so-called "Battle of Seattle" we have closely followed, with interest, the radical autonomous community in the U$ Unfortunately we have also learned the misinformation, or little information, they have on Venezuela, including some anarchists believing the

propaganda which the Venezuelan state spits out. What happened to "all governments lie"? Why should the Venezuelan government be different? Some very well known figures with a lot of influence in the anarchist scene in the U$, like Noam Chomsky, have a very romanticized vision and notion of what happens here in Venezuela. We know that the Venezuelan embassy in Washington has done a good job lobbying the progressive intellectuals in the U$ only showing them a Venezuela they want them to see. Six months ago the team of *El Libertario* got together with the Director of Z Magazine, Michael Albert, in what ended up being his first visit to Venezuela. We were interested in meeting him since we read he identified himself as anarchist and was very active within the U$ It was very disappointing to know that during his week long visit in Venezuela, we only saw him a day before he left, and that all week he had only visited the ministers of government and other state officials. Based on his meetings with government officials he reaffirmed the so-called revolutionary social changes happening here for others. He never walked through real streets or visited the poor neighborhoods, public hospitals, or a jail. He only traveled from his luxury hotel to the government buildings, met public officials, and then returned to his hotel. We told him about all the deals and business the government has done with the globalized market and multi-nationals, and that during Chávez's reign the administrative-justice system, schools, hospitals, and the jails are still in the same shape as past administrations or worst. Michael Albert called us liars and chose to return to the U$ to share his experience in Venezuela without any criticism of the Venezuelan diplomats or the version they showed him. Michael Albert even had the nerve to tell us that he wanted the Venezuelan government to print up one million copies of his book Participatory Economy to be distributed here in Venezuela! Michael Albert and other intellectuals, even Noam Chomsky, seem to blindly support the government of Venezuela for the simple reason that it has a critical anti-Bush discourse. But we don't have the luxury of coming here for a week and staying in hotels, limiting ourselves to the pretty side of things. We live the reality here everyday, and have endless proof that this so-called revolutionary government is not representative of the people. This government has completed many deals with global capitalists and North American multinationals, as well as corporations all over the world that only harm us. The

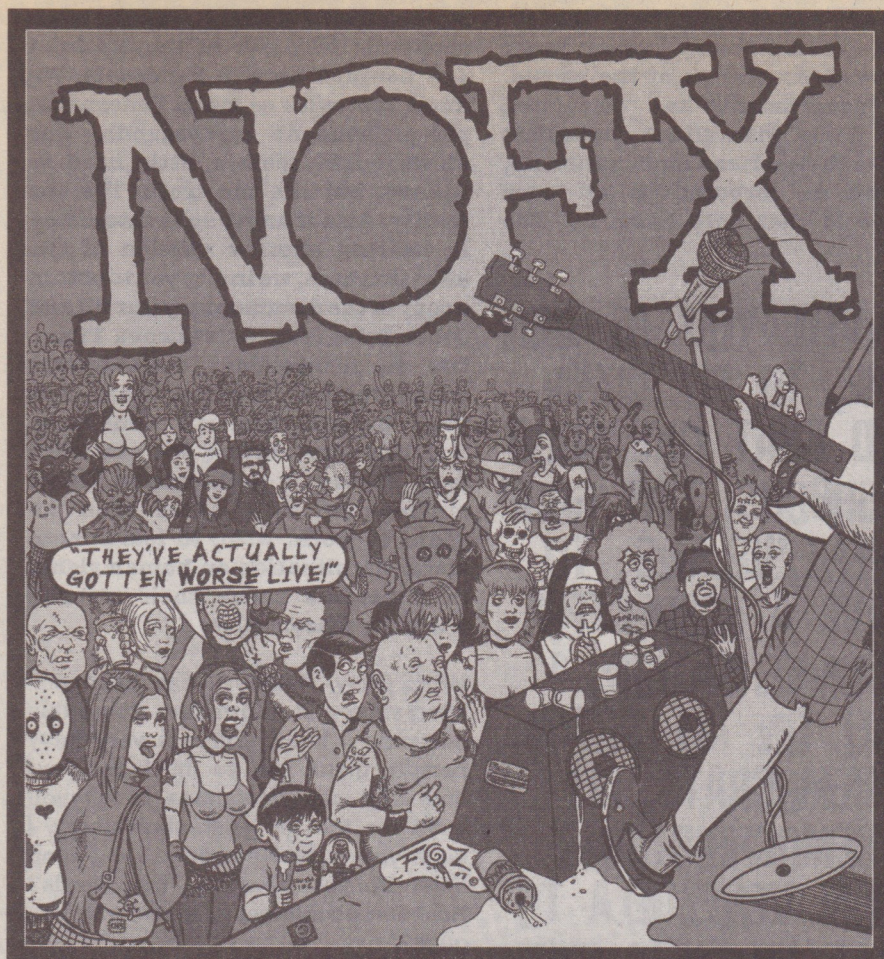
I INVITE YOU TO JOIN ME, TO SIT DOWN AND CHAT LIKE GOOD NEIGHBORS, LIKE GOOD VENEZUELANS, TO HAVE A RESPECTFUL CONVERSATION, I CALL ON ALL SOCIAL DEMOCRATS, ALL DEMOCHRISTIANS FROM VENEZUELA TO UNLEASH THEIR OWN BATTLE AND FORM AN OPPOSITIONAL FRONT TO DISMANTLE ALL ANARCHIST, TERRORIST, PARAMILITARY AND PRO-BUSH TENDENCIES FROM VENEZUELA!

—Hugo Chávez during the national television program *Alo presidente*, June 13, 2004.

government states, all the time, that all the revolutionaries are with Chávez— that anyone against him are right wing conservatives, which is a blatant lie. It is exactly this type of misinformation that creates myths, myths that are backed by very few real facts and are unfortunately consumed by most of the left wing. Not only in the U$, but in the rest of the world. This is why it was very important for us to do the tour of the U$ and Canada, so we can tell our story, our side of things. Tell the truth about the behavior of the Stalinist and Leninist here in Venezuela. We know that with so much Venezuelan pro-government propaganda our views might seem a little hard to believe, but it's the truth; it's our reality. Also if anybody is interested in hearing another version of the situation here, we invite you to obtain a copy of the documentary Our Oil and Other Tales from Gattacicova Films. It's an independent documentary with English subtitles that has been banned here in Venezuela. You can also review the statistics from Provea, a local human rights organization with more than 15 years of work. Also, to learn more about the situation on human rights in Venezuela check their website www.derechos.org.ve.

MRR: Okay, Rafael, it has been real interesting and informative doing this interview, I know you're a very busy person, thank you so much for your time and congratulations to all you guys for the ten year anniversary, I hope you guys are around for a long time! Do you have any last words? How can people get in touch with you guys?

El Libertario: Well first much thanks to you Lucho for your time and interest. I hope translating this interview won't be too hard. We don't expect the readers of MRR to believe everything we have said, but we do ask people to question not only the private media but also the Venezuelan state propaganda. If you're really interested in what happens here try investigating different sources, and you'll find out things here are not as pretty or egalitarian as the mighty Hugo Chávez claims them to be. Better yet if it's within your reach come visit us! We're very much interested in having contacts with different types of social movements in the U$ as well as its anarchist community, and especially with its radical Latino community. If anybody is interested in helping us in anyway please feel free to do so via email ellibertario@nodo50.org or through our website www.nodo50.org/ellibertario or www.contrapoder.org.ve, and if you don't have a computer feel free to write us a letter at EL LIBERTARIO c/o Raul F. Apartado, Postal 128, Carmelitas, Caracas Venezuela, South America...Thanx again for all your help Lucho! Salud y anarquia! ★



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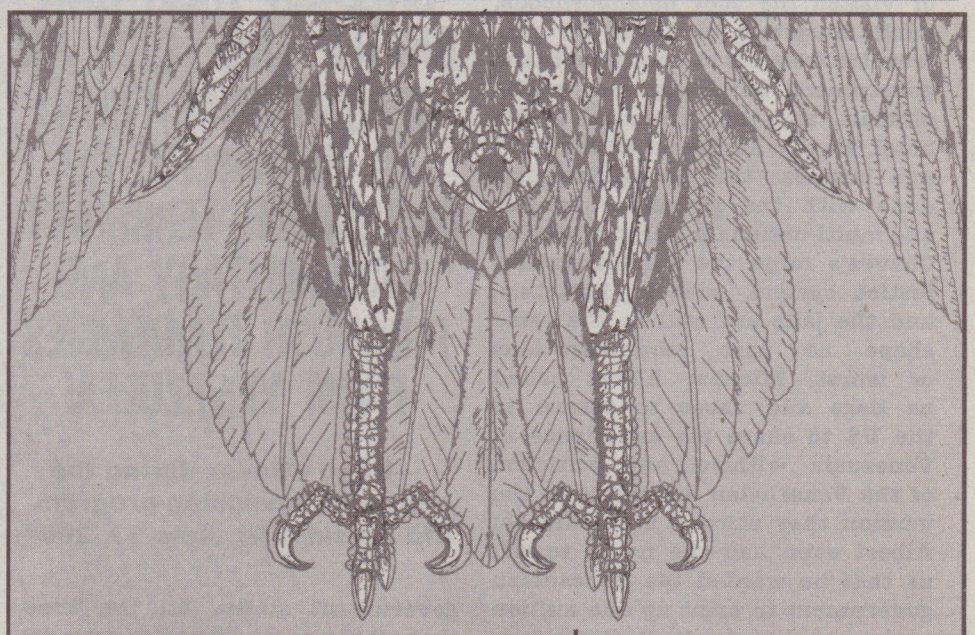

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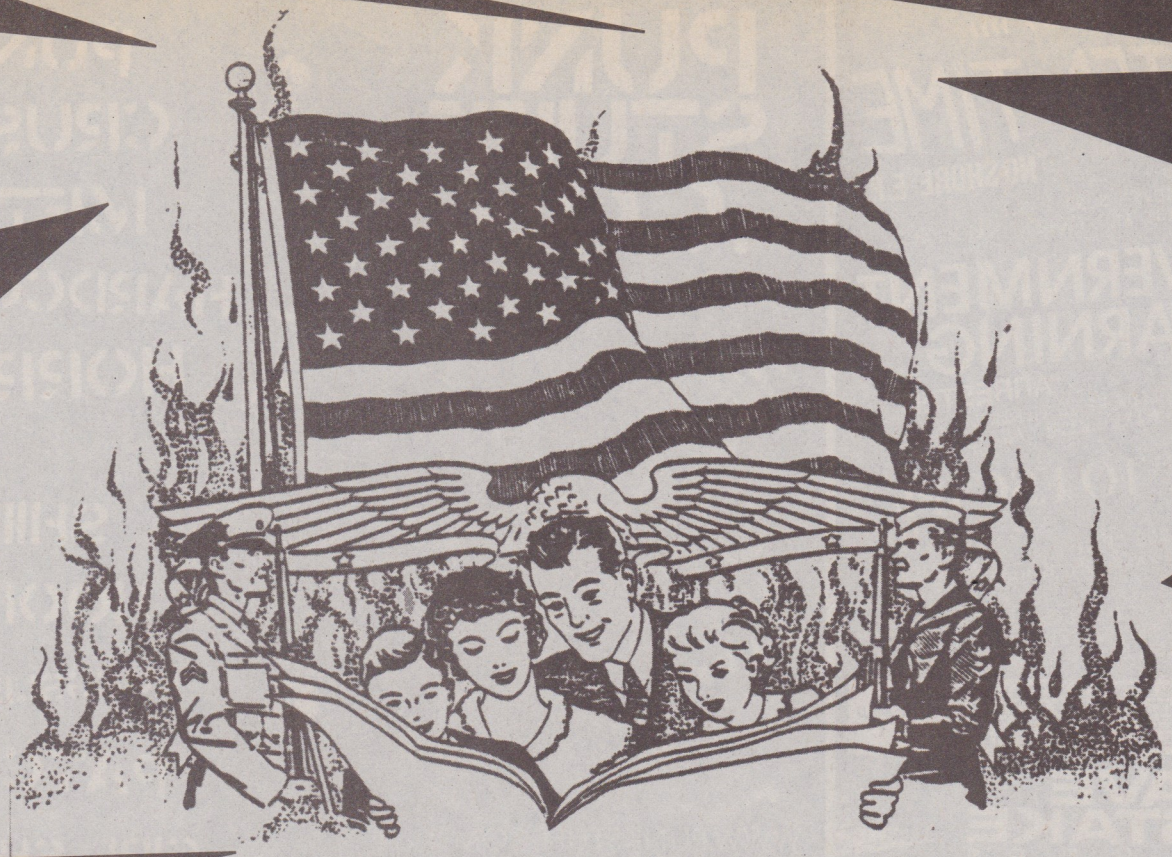


THE BAD SAMARITANS

The Bad Samaritans live up to their name—if you've ever seen them live, you know it's true. Playing for over seventeen years, the band has survived several line-up changes and adversity to put out their best release yet. When they are not playing, they put on shows in Ventura, loan their talents to some worthy causes, and do their part to keep the punk scene thriving in their area.
Interview by Renae Bryant

MRR: Who makes up the Bad Samaritans?

Eric: It's me on vocals. My brother Adam Lara is on bass. George Snow is on guitar and we have Dave Perry on drums. Our buddy Neil is also our drummer, when Dave can't do the touring

MRR: I first encountered the Bad Samaritans back in 2001. Give us a brief history of the band and releases.

Eric: Our first release was in 1990. It was a 7" EP called *Live Fast, Die Stupid*. We toured the US with Jughead's Revenge, to support the release. On that tour we played with NOFX, Oi Polloi, and Destroy. We played less frequently over the next several years due to line-up changes and drug problems. In 1998 we recorded our first full-length, *Ouch!!!* We played tons of shows in support of that release with bands like FEAR, RKL, Youth Brigade, The Adicts, Discharge, DOA, and a bunch more of our favorite bands. A few years later we put out our second full-length, *Dead From Dying*. We did many more shows with great bands in support of that one too. In March of 2007 we released our third full-length called *Re-Gur-Gi-Tate*. It's by far my favorite. We—I mean, I was clean and sober during recording. We were well ready for recording, and I think it shows.

MRR: When did you first start wearing women's underwear on stage and why?

Eric: I used to get absolutely trashed before and during our shows and would take off my clothes. Sometimes there would be women's underwear. Sometimes you got the Full Monty. After much therapy it was determined that my nudity may have been a weird cry for help, and I have since stopped dropping my drawers, which I am sure disappoints many, many people.

MRR: I really like your new album, *Re-gur-gi-tate*. Just out of curiosity, why the need for syllabication of the word and of course, why the title?

Eric: I am glad you like the record. If you have been to our shows, you may have noticed that our crowd is a little on the unruly side. We figured, "wow, with four syllables, people may not pronounce the word correctly," so we decided to make it easier on everyone and break it down syllable

by syllable. The title fits well with the cover photo, which is an enhanced picture of a pile of puke.

MRR: My favorite song is the first one, "Walk Away." Tell us more about these lyrics.

Eric: In general, our lyrics tend to lean to the personal as opposed to the topical. "Walk Away" I suppose reflects the desire to walk away from conflicts instead of being defined by those conflicts. "I Was Born Old" is about feeling tired, worn out by life, and feeling like you were born that way.

MRR: What are your favorite songs from the album and is there an overall theme to the writing?

Eric: I like "Stuck in a Rut" a lot. George wrote that, and he does write the majority of the music and lyrics too. I think (with writing for our band) that since the lyrics are personal and come from issues with one's life, defining a theme would be difficult. I guess continuing in the face of adversity could be one take.

MRR: Is "Ted Offensive" about Ted Bundy? Why the homage to the psychopath?

Eric: I guess it could be taken to be about Ted Bundy. It's not an homage to the guy. George wrote it and even though the lyrics are harsh, they do tell a story. Sometimes people need to have some harshness thrown at them to make them think a little.

I USED TO GET ABSOLUTELY TRASHED BEFORE AND DURING OUR SHOWS AND WOULD TAKE OFF MY CLOTHES. SOMETIMES THERE WOULD BE WOMEN'S UNDERWEAR, SOMETIMES YOU GOT THE FULL MONTY. AFTER MUCH THERAPY IT WAS DETERMINED THAT MY NUDITY MAY HAVE BEEN A WEIRD CRY FOR HELP, AND I HAVE SINCE STOPPED DROPPING MY DRAWERS, WHICH I AM SURE DISAPPOINTS MANY, MANY PEOPLE.

MRR: You've done a lot of touring lately. How have the tours gone? What are some of the highs and lows for you?

Eric: I love playing live. Recording I could do without, but playing live is awesome. Now that we have done this for a little while, we can plan things a bit better and the whole experience is more rewarding. All the latest trips have been great. We'd love to go to Europe and Asia soon. The only downside with playing so much is it makes it hard to plan personal trips with our significant others.

MRR: You play with bands that may be considered to have strong political views. I don't consider Bad Samaritans to be a political punk band though. All bands do have some issues they embrace. What political issues do the Bad Samaritans care about?

Eric: We do play with bands that do wear their political views on their sleeves, and I support them 100%. I don't consider the Bad Sams a political band. I personally feel that writing about politics can make your music dated and less relevant later on. With that said, we have appeared on a compilation for the National Organization for Women. We have played benefits for organizations like Los Angeles Comission On Assaults Against Women, and Children Of The Night. I and the rest of the band tend to lean pretty heavily to the left of the spectrum in regards to politics. Pro-choice, anti-war, pro-gay rights, pretty liberal lefty stuff.

MRR: I understand that you, Eric, are sober. How has that battle been for you, as you are still part a scene that has a lot of drinking in its socializing?

Eric: Well, I have been clean and sober for almost four years. I have strong support network. I did take six months off from the band to get my head together. It isn't a problem for me to be around drinking. I drink soda or water. If drugs are around, which does happen, I just excuse myself. My choice to be clean and sober is just that, my choice. What other folks choose to do is their choice and I would never slight someone for their personal choices.

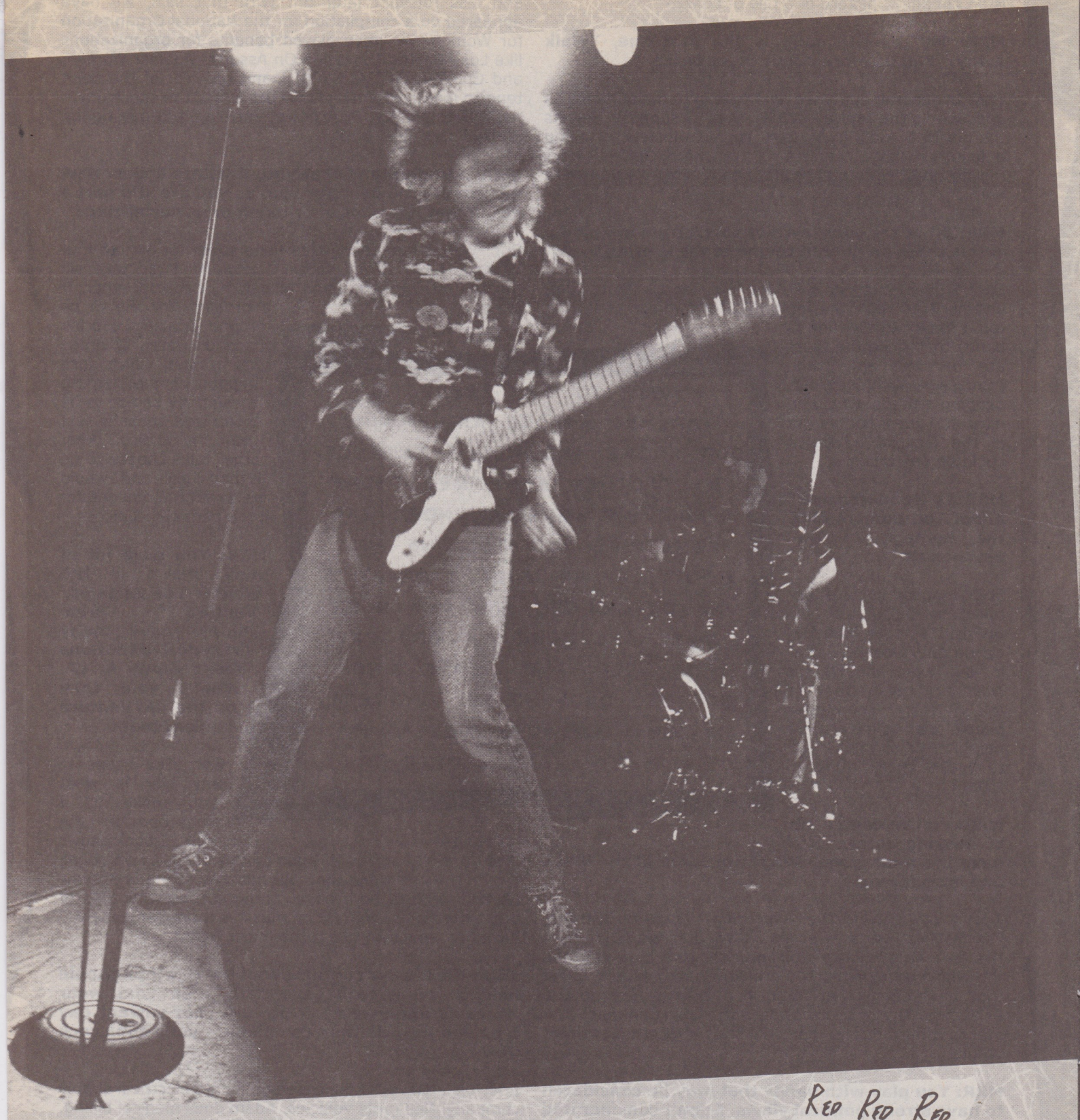
MRR: You do a lot of punk shows in the greater Los Angeles/ Ventura area. People have many preconceived notions about shows in LA. What's your take on the LA/Ventura punk scene?

Eric: The scene in any city is what you make it. I subscribe to the D I Y ethic. I book shows that I'd like to attend. If I don't like a band, I won't book them. The one thing that will ruin any scene is apathy. LA and Ventura both have strong scenes with tons of great bands. As long as the music is there someone will have find an outlet to get the music heard.

MRR: I'm always curious about the day jobs people hold in punk rock (especially men who wear women's underwear). What are your current day jobs and how do they compliment your punk rock life?

Eric: Well, Dave is a salesperson for an electrical supply company. Neil rents vehicles. Adam does medical billing. George is a finished carpenter. I am an anger management counselor, I am also a certified hypnotherapist. I book shows which at times can be financially rewarding. As long as you enjoy what you do, I think it compliments our punk rock life quite nicely.

You can reach Bad Samaritans at www.badsamaritans.



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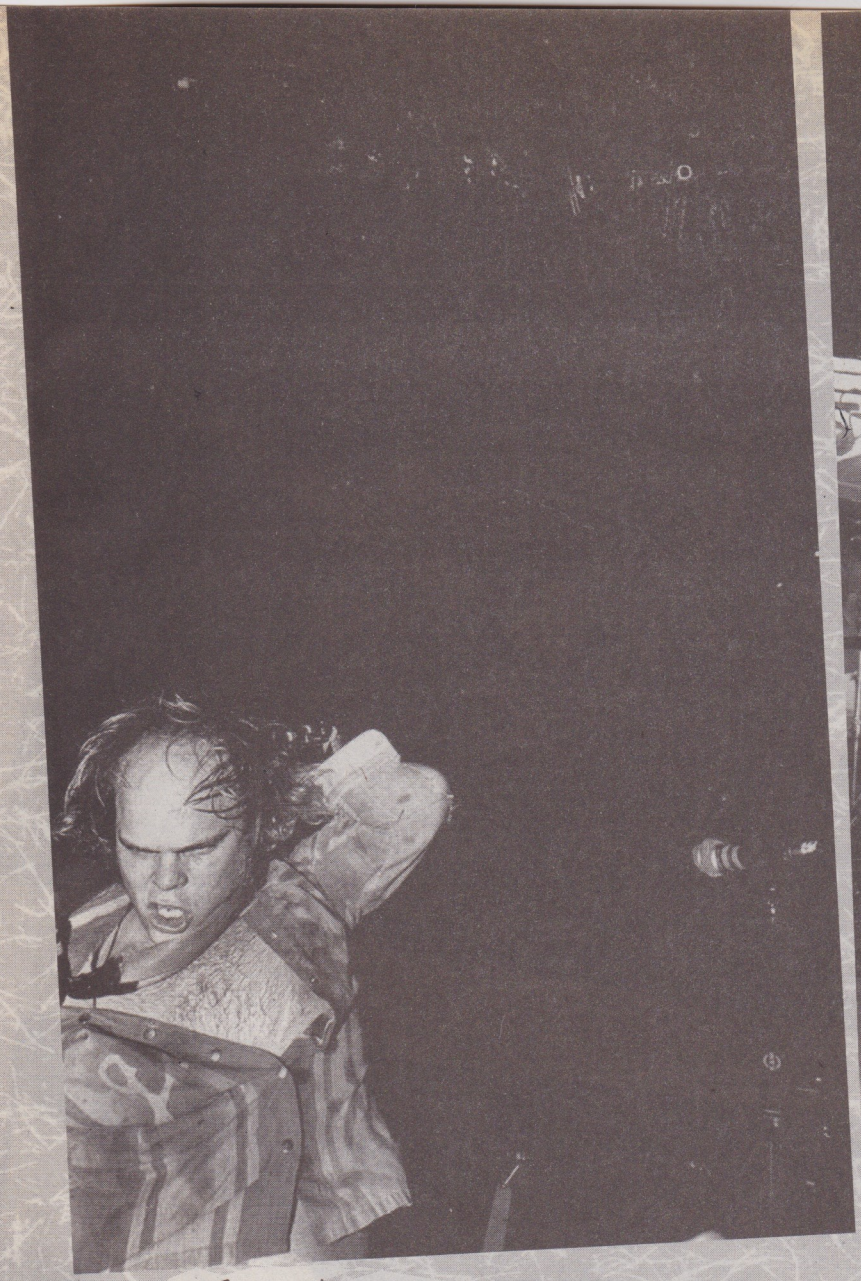

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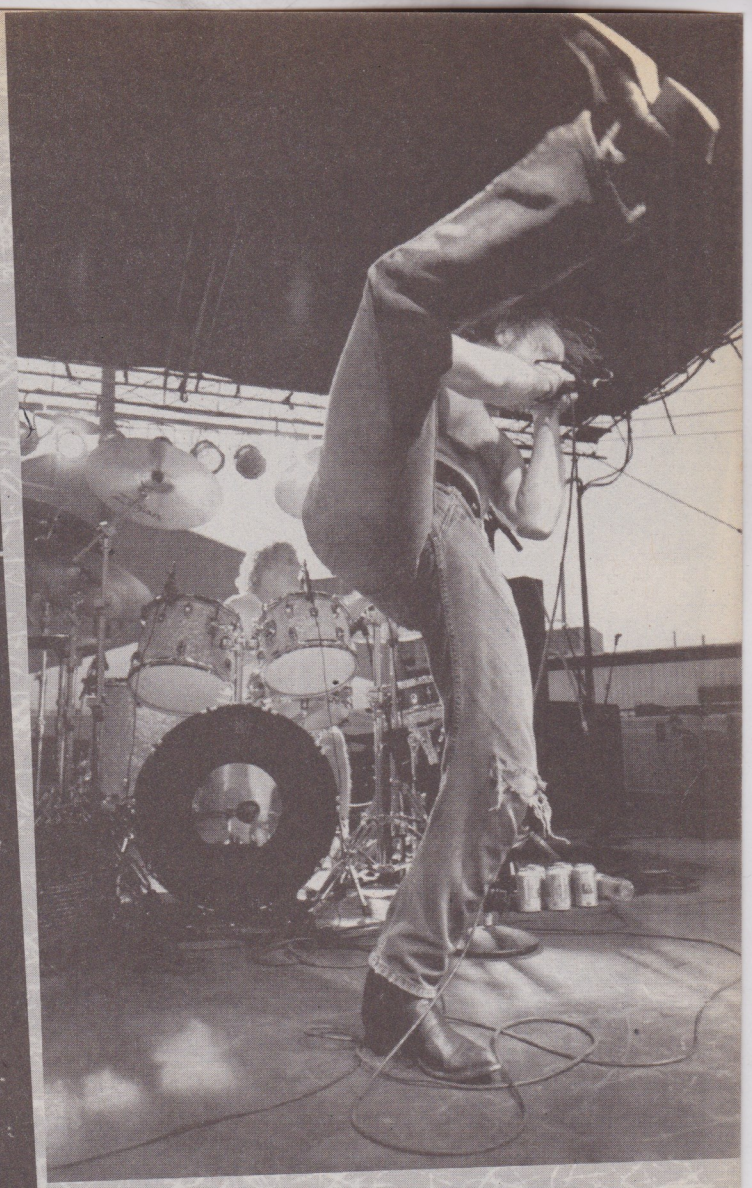

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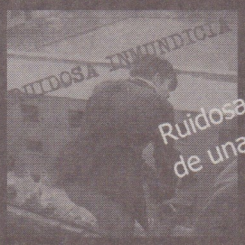

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Venus: Illegal y Que

Venus told her story in a recorded interview and additional writings in July and August 2007, in Monterrey, Mexico. translated by Jane G.

My decision to go to the United States was originally pretty much an adventure. Basically, I went with no clue of what was going to happen. I went with a tourist visa and a permit to stay for eight days and arrived there with some female friends who were supposedly going to help me find a job, and help me out with a place to stay. The idea was to go to Houston. We got there but as it turned out, the person who was going to help us couldn't, or actually didn't want to help, so I was going to go back to Monterrey. As a last resort I talked to a friend in Chicago, and she told me to come there. She said "in Chicago there are lots of jobs, and you can stay at my house, it's not a problem. There are vans that will bring you right to the house, and once you get here, if you don't have money I can help you pay and you can pay me back later." So I started to arrange the van trip—they charged $100 from Houston to wherever you wanted to go in any part of Chicago. I remember that we left on a Tuesday night to go from Houston to Chicago. The van left from kind of a bad neighborhood of Houston, so I called and they came to pick me up, and we headed over to that neighborhood that we were leaving from. I didn't like it. There were a lot of people there from southern countries like Guatemala and El Salvador. When we got there I said, "I'm going to Chicago," to which they replied, "You're going in that van?" It turned out that I went in a van with nothing but men, and I was thinking, "*please let me not be the only woman, please let me not be the only woman*." The friend I was going to travel with decided she didn't want to come with me, but at that point, I couldn't go back. So the owner comes over and says to the guys, "Here's the only woman who's going with you, I'm leaving her with you." I'm thinking, "oh no," but I told myself that I was already here, and I couldn't go back anyway because I didn't even have the address of the person we were staying with.

So we started the trip, and the guys who were traveling in the van started to ask me questions. The only Mexicans were the driver and myself—all the other people were from Honduras, Guatemala, or El Salvador. They were coming illegally, so they started asking about how I had crossed the border, and who had brought me across. I said, "no one, I crossed with a visa." They had all been brought over by coyotes, so I started to get nervous thinking about what would happen if immigration stops us? The whole trip I didn't sleep, and I didn't eat either, because I didn't want to have to go to the bathroom later. What if they left me behind? I spent two days like that because they had to drop off a bunch of people in different states on the way to Chicago. One guy who talked to me, a man from Honduras, asked me, "Why are you coming to the United States, and why did you leave Mexico? Do you have a family?" "Yes," I replied. "Do you have kids?" Yes. "How many kids do you have?" "Four," I told him, and after that he pretty much left me alone until he got out at a farm in Kansas where people were waiting for him. Everyone in the van had a destination and a job waiting for them. Most were getting out in places like that—little towns in the middle of nowhere at farms and ranches. After they left me in Chicago, they were going to keep heading to New York to drop off two more people—that's the way they did it. If immigration had stopped us, they would have arrested us. I had a permit to be there and it was still valid, but just going in that van with ten people who didn't have any permits, I would have been arrested too.

I got to Chicago on a Thursday afternoon and my friend was waiting for me. She wasn't actually a friend; she was an acquaintance—a neighbor from when I was little. She had helped me pay half the trip fare until I could pay her back. I was a bit more relaxed because at least I was with someone I knew, but now what do I do? We went over to her house, where she lived with her husband and four kids. I only lasted two days staying with her, because she suggested I might prefer to live with another childhood acquaintance—a woman that only has one child, and is a single mother. She thought I would settle in better with her. I said, "OK, let me talk to her." I had two days to get settled, because I also had to look for work. They told me how to look for a job, how to get a fake social security card, and a fake ID so I could work. So I went in with that friend and her son. After I got there she told me, "OK, here are the rules, you have to pay half the rent, half the electricity, half the bills, and half the food." Suddenly I felt a lot of pressure, because I would have to pay rent, and a bunch of things I hadn't even consumed yet, but I already had that commitment. OK, no problem, it seemed fair anyway, right? It did make sense, except that she had a kid and it *was* different, but OK, no problem.

They suggested that I go to a temp employment agency. After spending $100 they had leant me on the false documents, I left at four in the morning so I could go find work. I would go to those agencies at 4:00 am and sometimes you'd be there until 10:00 am before they would finally assign you to a job and even then it would be part time—four hours, five hours—but I had to stay there waiting. That was how I started working. My first job was from five in the afternoon until three in the morning—putting the caps on shampoo bottles. A batch of ten bottles would come along the line, and you had to close all of them really well, because otherwise they would spill and stop up the whole machine. It was a big deal, a big loss for the owners. So you had to stand there, and by two in the morning you were half asleep,

but you had to keep moving your hands. That was my first job. I would get home, sleep a bit, not see my friend, then get up at noon because the ride would come. There were people who made a living driving you to work—they charged $20 a week, and they picked you up in vans at your home and dropped you off at the agency. The agency had its own vans, so they took you to the jobs in those. At the end of your shift the first vans took you home again. Sometimes there were 25 of us in one van and we each paid $20 per week for the ride. Nearly all the jobs were like that, in factories that, for example, made soy sauce, and garlic sauce—where the job was the same thing: put the caps on the bottles—at weird hours, and never steady. Some days they would send you at 5:00 pm, other days at 10:00 am, and it wasn't the same schedule or the same company. Other jobs I did, I called them trash jobs, for example, they would be giving away samples of shampoo, so the job was that you had to put the shampoo samples in envelopes and seal the envelopes. And you do that all day. Another job was separating the McDonalds toys—the ones that had already gone out of style, from the little bags they were in and putting the bag on one side, and the toy on the other.

At that point the friend I was living with said to me, "hopefully, one of these days they will send you to where I work, I can talk to the woman in charge of the office and have them send you, because maybe they will choose you and you can end up getting hired directly." At her work, (I don't know what she did) they asked for me. I had made friends with some of the women in the agency office, so when I said to send me to that factory, they said, "when the opportunity comes up, OK." So the opportunity did come up, and they sent me there. I was working with my friend, only I was still with the agency, so it wasn't the same salary and it wasn't a sure thing. She tried to make sure that they always asked for me, and always on the same schedule, until finally, they liked my work enough that they hired me directly. I was making windshields for motorcycles, and some plastic things that go on the bumpers of cars and trucks, but mostly for motorcycles.

Now I had a steady job and felt even more relaxed, but I was also scared they would investigate my social security number, and there would be a problem. But my friend assured me that about 90% or 99% of the people don't have documents, and the owner already knows and prefers to pay us cheap and not find out. He didn't let immigration agents into the factory. He said outside was another matter to which he didn't get involved, but here in his company, they can't come in.

We had benefits, mostly health insurance and annual vacations. I learned some English because I was there in the office. I don't remember how much they paid me, it was something like $4.80 an hour, and I worked eight hours a day, so it was about $200 a week minus the taxes, but they treated me well. It was better than at the agency, where sometimes you ended up with $50 a week, where after paying the ride and giving my friend my share of the rent, there was nothing left. Finally I had a steady job. The pay wasn't great, but it was a steady paycheck. I kept on the same routine, where someone comes to pick you up, and you pay them $20 a week to take you to work. Eventually, I decided to learn how to get there on the Metro and on buses, because sometimes the ride didn't get there. When that happened, I got to work late or lost a whole day of work. I stayed at that job for a year.

In 1996 I had gotten together with my partner and ended up getting pregnant. The insurance paid for the birth of my daughter. After she was born, I didn't work any more. The idea had been to have an adventure, but we started to experience the anxiety that illegal immigrants face. For example, the worry that they will say, "there goes immigration," and even though the agents didn't come into the factory, when you went out you had to be careful. Sometimes we would see the migra vans in the factories near where we worked, and we would say, "let's leave later," or "let's leave by a different route."

I don't even know at what moment things changed. When I stopped working, I was with my partner, and we worried that they would catch us, we lived in a Mexican neighborhood, and sometimes the migra would go there and ask people for ID, and if you didn't have it... well, it was better just not to go out. So it suddenly became an uncomfortable situation. We hadn't gone there with that idea, but we were living it, both of us.

At the time that I left my job, he had problems with his job. He had broken a finger and they didn't want to pay his medical expenses. He didn't have insurance, so he got a lawyer, and in the end they reached an agreement and paid him. At this point we started to think about going back home. At times they didn't give him work, and I wasn't working, and we had our daughter. We made the decision to go back to Mexico because we had never expected to end up living with those kinds of problems, without documents, and we didn't have a reason to stay there in those circumstances. I was afraid, I didn't go out, I was stuck inside all the time, and I knew I couldn't do anything else but go back.

I was already finding it difficult to think about leaving my daughter in a daycare center and going back to work. We were in the US for three and a half years. The last year and a half I spent stuck inside the house, so I said, "you know what, let's just leave." It was tough because we did at least have a place to live, and we had work, even though it wasn't constant. I never felt discriminated against in the punk scene, but when I went to the hospital to have my baby, it seemed strange to me that when my partner came and cut the baby's umbilical cord, they didn't give him a gown or even gloves, which they gave to all the other men. At work, sometimes it was actually Mexicans who treated us badly. In the offices where I went to get public benefits for my daughter, I didn't feel bad because I saw that they treated everyone badly, not just me. We were all Black or Hispanic people, but they treated us all equally regardless of whether we were immigrants without documents.

The return to Mexico was a bit confusing, I was really excited about going back, mostly because of my family and because I missed my city. You learn to appreciate things when you're far away from them, and I missed my family a lot and missed the way of life here. I had problems because of my illegal status, but at the moment we actually left Chicago, I started missing that city a lot too. It was like a part of my life had been left behind there—I had been part of a community. So when I left, I felt nostalgic about the place

and I cried.

When we came back, we experienced the same bad treatment as always by Mexicans here, and it made us angry. We were returning defeated, but the people at customs, they see your situation and they don't care. They just want money. That killed our happiness a bit but when we finally got into Monterrey the excitement and nervousness started to overwhelm me. Seeing my family again was really great and very emotional; something that I still enjoyed even three and a half years later. I'll never forget the time I spent as an illegal immigrant but the truth is, I don't have any desire to go back to that way of life, although, I do miss my friends there.

The economic situation is really different. In the US we had economic problems but as hard as things got, you can't compare it to here. At least we never lacked food, and we could go out and somehow get ahead even though we earned very little, because we always earned less than other people. And here the economic situation is more difficult. Ever since I can remember, the economic situation here in Mexico has been difficult.

If I could, if it wasn't for the problems of documents and permits and visas and all that, I'd like to keep living here but go to the US to work. Maybe spend six months here, six months there. Right now we can't travel because to get a visa you have to own property, have insurance, have bank accounts, and fulfill a bunch of requirements. Apart from all of that, the visa costs $100, you have to get an appointment which costs $40, and even then if they don't feel like it, they don't give you anything and you lose all that time and money. It's no longer like it was when I got a visa 10 years ago, and you could have a permit to visit for one month, two months... Now it's really different and they take your fingerprints, photographs, everything. We couldn't do now what we did then. It would be really hard. In any case, I wouldn't want to live there again anyway. I wouldn't want to relive the experience of rejection that you live through there, which people are still living through and I believe people will be living through for many years. I wouldn't be able to take it—it's too frustrating. Here the economic situation is difficult, but at least we all speak the same language. A lot of us have the same problems, because we're in our country. Your rights are not respected by your government or by the authorities, but at least you're with your family. When we were living in Chicago, with all the problems we had with being illegal, the only thing that motivated us and made us feel a little bit free, was going to shows and being around the Latino bands of those days. Some of them were people who were in similar situations to ours, or they had family members who had lived through or were living through the odyssey of being illegal in another country. We were already part of a Latino punk community and movement that was taking place at that time, from '95 to '98. I personally really identified with the song lyrics of bands like Los Crudos, Huasipungo, Kontraataque, Tezacrifico, Youth Against, to name a few. It was really great to be part of that scene, since going to the shows was my way of venting all the frustration I felt at the time—about the rejection I was experiencing, and the racism that I was subjected to just because of the simple fact of being illegal. I loved shouting the choruses with the bands: "No te debo nada, no te debo nada" (I don't owe you anything) or "Fuck 187"... and just talking and hanging out with friends who were illegal punks like me and experienced the same rage and frustration that I did at that time. I remember that I felt proud to wear a Los Crudos t-shirt (which I still have) with a slogan that said, "Ilegal y que???" (Illegal, so what???). I loved to wear it to the place where they gave me the government food coupons for my daughter, and the guards (gringos of course) would look at me but didn't dare say anything. Once I was lucky enough that one of them asked me, "Hey, is what your t-shirt says true?" I answered her: "What do you think?" She just laughed and didn't say anything. Things like that made me feel good. The punk community was where I felt respected and accepted. We were not a large community but we were very united. We were connected to people in Chicago, New York, and Los Angeles. My partner had the luck to play with Youth Against, and from going on tour with them I was lucky enough to get to know a bit more of the Latino punk scene in the US. Not just for the music. For me it was really great to make so many friends that were themselves, or had some family member or even their parents, in a similar situation to ours for many years. Talking to them made me reflect a lot on my situation. For example, some of our friends' parents had been living there for 20 or 30 years and had originally gone, or so they said, just for a little while, with the idea of returning to Mexico. However, their lives had just slipped by over there, they had kids and had worked hard, and a few had the luck to fix their legal situation and decided to stay there. The truth is, that I didn't want my life to go by like that—hoping to one day return to my country but in the meantime putting up with that situation of rejection...no more. That trip helped me to reflect and to see that that wasn't what I aspired to in life. Now that I'm here, I see that after nearly nine years since I got back, the life of undocumented immigrants in the US is the same or worse. It makes me really angry and that's why I don't regret coming back. Just like me, a lot of people go with the idea of working at jobs that gringos would never do: badly paid laborers, dishwashers, cooks, farm workers, etc. It's a crude reality but that's the way it is.

I have reached the conclusion that the whole thing is just a business. If the government really wanted to get rid of all the undocumented people, it already would have done it. With all the technology it claims to have. For example, when I was working I was paid by check and I could cash my check in a bank, I worked with a false social security number and I don't think it would have been that difficult to find me and deport me, right? I believe it suits them to keep things like this, because otherwise the people who work arresting undocumented immigrants, the people who work in offices legalizing people's status, and more importantly all the business on the border would come to an end. So, what jobs would they have since a lot of people are against "the undocumented"? But in the end it's part of a racist system against people who are just trying to improve their economic situation and are in search of an opportunity that corrupt countries like mine don't give us. At least it didn't go as badly for me as it did for other people who have to enter the country by crossing the river, and living through a terrible odyssey to get to the US. Some people get to their destination and keep on suffering rejection, because they don't speak the language and because of racism on the job or in certain other places just because they are Latino. A lot of people went there and are still going there and they will keep going to try to live their "American dream," which I prefer to call the "Gringo nightmare." Now I have other problems but at least I don't feel the rejection and racism that I felt at times over there.

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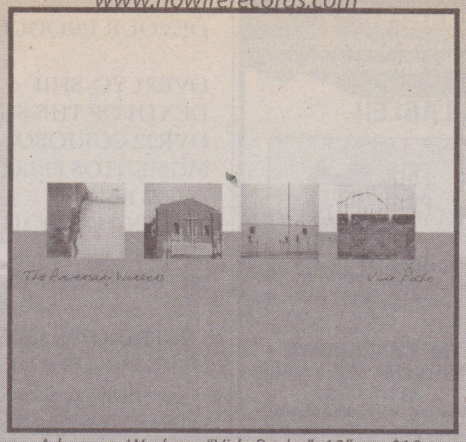

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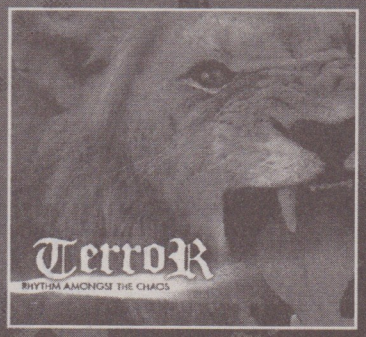

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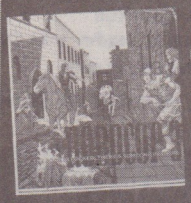

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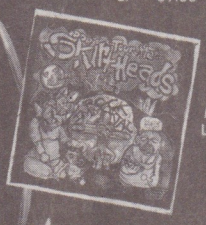

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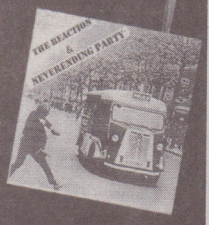

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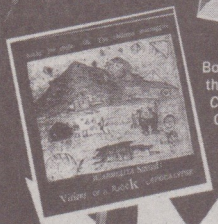

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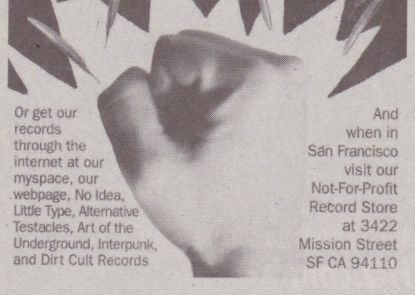

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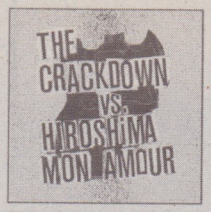

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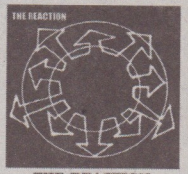

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UNTERMENSCH

Though the term "untermensch" can be traced back to the 1800s, it's mostly known for its association with Nazi ideology and propaganda. In 1922, American propagandist Lothrop Stoddard wrote *The Revolt Against Civilization: The Menace of the Under Man* using the term "untermensch" essentially as an opposite of Nietzche's "ubermensch." That book, an anti-Bolshevik rant describing how Russia was now run by "under man," was published in Germany in 1925 and was celebrated by the Nazis. The book's racism against Slavs and criticism of the Communist Party would be expanded by the Nazis to include what they considered to be all degenerate groups justifying their policy of genocide. In 1942, Himmler published *Der Untermensch*, a tract of anti-Soviet propaganda.

Dave, bass player for Untermensch: "We chose to align ourselves with the Untermensch, picking up on the Nazi's reference to the Jews, Slavs, and gypsies who were less than human in their eyes. By some convoluted logic that we were applying at the time we were saying, sort of, that if we are the Untermensch, and we can produce music, and a fanzine, and arrange gigs, and create some scene around ourselves, then you can do as much as this, if not better. Maybe it was a bit complex as it caused us some problems when people didn't understand the reference. We were forever having to explain it. As 'brand management' it was crap!"

Like so many others, Dave came to punk and its suggestion of sweeping change in pop music and youth culture.

Dave: "It was like a breath of fresh air—music and lyrics that really spoke to us about our own lives, rather than the mindless disco drivel or esoteric meanderings of prog rock that preceded the punk revolution."

With a name like Untermensch, it's no surprise that the group was originated cerebrally and less out of any rock clichés.

Dave: "Mark and I were close friends and we decided to form a band. It was very 'punk rock'—an ideological decision to form a band. Neither of us had been in a band before. Mark owned a guitar so he was gonna be the guitarist. I bought a bass. Four strings. I thought I could manage that 'cause I'd played a violin before. We roped in Mark's next-door-neighbor, Terry, to play the keyboards. He, at least, was reasonably proficient!"

From the start, the group was leaning to the left. In some ways, the group might have had more ideologically in common with non-anarchist, socialist-leaning groups like Crisis.

Dave: "Mark and I were probably more left-leaning but admired the commitment and soul of the anarchist movement at the time."

In fact, it was more the momentum of the times and the friction of quick growth that made the anarchist scene appealing.

Dave: "Probably just the energy of it. It felt like people were actually *bovvered* about something and wanted to do something to change it. There was a sense of common purpose. Lost it a bit since..."

Soon, the group wasn't tangentially involved with the anarcho scene and found real allies.

Dave: "The band was more than just a group of musicians playing songs. We were involved in disseminating information with the fanzine and bringing anarcho-punk bands to play in our town. We were mates with Andy T, who was another local *artiste,* and so we supported each other even if we had some ideological differences."

One of the drawbacks of a group of friends spontaneously deciding to make music, punk or otherwise, is the fact that there is a long, painful period of complete inability. Untermensch had their growing pains.

Dave: "Fucking terrible. We had nine gigs cancelled before we ever got to play. I recall hilarious things like Terry's synth failing to work and then suddenly coming to life like an aircraft was landing on the roof. Another time, Mark forgot the song which he kicked-off when Untermensch had a 'big break' playing at the town festival in front of just about *everyone*."

But the group actually gelled pretty quickly. Thunderous bass playing and rhythm section that felt somewhere between the Stranglers and pre-Theater Of Hate group the Pack. The keyboards and the somewhat sinister melodies are reminiscent of Killing Joke. In fact, there is an element of Crisis in the songwriting as well.

Dave: "Every member of Untermensch would give a different answer to that. It's the reason why we had our own sound, because we had different musical influences."

The group would only venture once into the studio recording a six-song demo. Though never officially released, the tracks were popular on a number of tape compilations of the time.

Dave: "There was a six-track demo. At least a couple of the songs were released to the public on compilation cassettes."

The Untermensch songs, taken from the group's peak, reflect many of the leftist concerns of the day as well as personalized stories.

Dave: "'El Salvador' was about the US interference in El Salvador. We compared this to the greater media coverage of Russian interference in Afghanistan. How things have changed, eh?

"'Ashfield Valley Headkick' became the most well-known of our songs. It is a true story of how three band members were attacked by 15 skinheads because we were eating Asian food. 'Manifesto' is actually the first few stanzas from Marx & Engels' early pamphlet.'The Sociology Man' was about a teacher of mine. Oddly enough, both Mark and I studied sociology."

This is 1982
This is sick
This is the Ashfield Valley Headkick

Unfortunately, this great sounding demo is all the group ever recorded. Talk of a vinyl release never materialized before the group split.

Dave: "There was talk..."

Despite everything, the group was still open to the foibles of all groups. The band split after only being together a few short years.

Dave: "My fault. Fell out with Mark over a girl. If not for that we could have become rock legends!"

Though no longer as involved in political punk, which in many ways they were only tangentially related to anyway, the former members continued playing music for years in different capacities.

Dave: "Mark, Terry, and Jimmy worked in The Monkey Run, bagging a Peel Session and several records. I joined Black Alsatian and later Sister Rain, making three discs and touring France and Germany."

Guitarist Mark went on to form Pomona Records and then Pomona Publishing. Originally involved in the group's fanzine, he in more recent times has published a book of Crass lyrics (*Love Songs*) and a fantastic autobiography from Boff of Chumbawamba (*Footnote*) as well as his own writing (*Believe in the Sign*).

Dave: "Mark had always been a writer and so publishing music and books was a natural progression."

However many years later, Dave now feels even more connected to anarchist values with growing national cynicism of Labour once again.

Dave: "I actually feel closer to it now than I did at the time. The anarchists were right. The Labour Party of old has become a hideous war-machine overseas and clamping down on civil liberties at home."

As can be imagined, he can also fairly evaluate the group and look back on it fondly.

Dave: "The Untermensch songs are good songs. Would I do it again? Yeah, too bloody right! Time for another revolution, and this time we don't get fooled again!"

ACTS OF DESPERATION

THE STORY OF SHRAPNEL

By Lance Hahn

From the south of Wales came Shrapnel, led by the twins Stew and Paul. Making music that could range from mid-tempo punk to quirky funk rhythms to metallic guitar flourishes; the band was always guided by clear and tuneful vocals. While in some ways part of the musical transition of the mid-to-late '80s, they were as much a punk band as their origins.

Stewart, vocalist: "Myself and my twin brother Paul got into punk rock through a cousin initially. I was aware of it around '77 through newspapers (the reports on the Pistols and the 'punk craze' sweeping Britain, etc.) but it wasn't until '78 (I was 13) that I started buying records, by the likes of The Rezillos, The Clash, Stranglers, Damned, etc, most of whom I'd heard through my cousin or seen on television. The first punk record I bought was *Germ Free Adolescents* by the mighty X-Ray Spex."

Fans of punk, several members started off in more straightforward second wave punk bands.

Stewart: "Paul and a few of the others had got a band together called Society's Victims (after the Discharge song) but they only did one gig and broke up (very punk rock)."

But by the start of the decade they were intrigued and inspired by the anarcho scene happening miles away in London.

Stewart: "At the very beginning we were aware of Crass, Poison Girls, Honey Bane, Flux Of Pink Indians, and Dirt because of the early releases on Crass records (Crass had also played in Swansea, a nearby city, in `80 with Poison Girls and in '81 with Dirt, so we'd all seen them by that point) but I personally didn't think of it as an "Anarcho scene," just punk bands with political lyrics. It was about '82/'83 that I really thought about an "Anarcho scene," when there were a lot more records released by bands like The Mob, Subhumans, Rudimentary Peni, Anti-Sect, The System, etc. We never set out to be a political band, we just wanted to be a full bore punk band (Discharge were a big influence), have a laugh, and drink a lot. Things have to be put into context, really. Hearing a band like Crass in '78/'79 was a revelation because nothing had sounded like it before, the same with Discharge. Before that I thought Stiff Little Fingers were brutal. Afterwards it all changed (for better or worse)."

Looking for a more serious venture than Society's Victims, Shrapnel began practicing at the end of 1981.

Stewart: "The band started out of boredom really. We came from a very small town in South Wales, with very little to do. Paul had started playing guitar (bought from the catalogue of course) so it seemed like a logical thing to do. The band were all school friends. There was a different singer for the first four gigs, he left and I was the replacement, for the simple reason that I

knew all the words to the songs. The band formed in late 1981/early '82."

From London, anarcho punk was having a rippling effect and the more other likeminded groups expanded their traveling, the more the message got out, the more the message was defined.

Stewart: "Punk was very popular in South Wales from very early on. Lots of punk bands played in Cardiff, Newport, Swansea, and a small town called Port Talbot. With regards to Anarcho punk, a bit of a scene did gradually develop. There were two bands from Swansea, Pseudo Sadists and No Label (whose guitarist Alun was in Shrapnel briefly) that were on the second *Bullshit Detector* LP on Crass records and there were a group of people from Port Talbot who organized some great gigs in a youth centre: Crass, Dirt, and Annie Anxiety played in '82, The System, No Label, and Armistice (another local group) in '82 (I think) .The last gig they put on was The Subhumans, Disorder, Amebix, Ad Nauseum, and The A Heads in maybe early '83. Later on a group of us started organizing gigs wherever we could locally—we had to, because if we didn't do it nobody else would."

With a limited variety of gigs and bands to play with in their hometown, the group slowly started making their own concentric circles venturing out of Wales and into England for occasional gigs.

Stewart: "The first few gigs were in school/church halls on our own mainly, then we started organizing gigs in working men's clubs (they needed the business) with other local bands such as Armistice, Skull Attack, and The Secluded. These gigs were fairly boisterous affairs with a mixture of people who were into punk and people who just turned up 'cause there was nothing else happening. It was a bit of a weird mix, but always involved lots of drinking. Our first gig out of town was with a band called Riot Squad (they had a single out at the time called *Fuck the Tories*) in Cardiff, it was a fucking disaster as somebody had spread the word that the gig was cancelled so nobody turned up (maybe about five people). We started doing more gigs outside Wales with the likes of The Subhumans, Broken Bones, The Sears, and Cult Maniax, mainly through meeting people at gigs and writing to/nagging them. If we got a gig we'd hire a van, get anybody we could find over 21 (and I mean anybody, we had some proper nutters) to drive it, fill the van with all our mates, and head off down the M4."

Within a year, they had made friends with The Subhumans. Having recorded an early demo, the group spent the next couple of years playing out and traveling around to gigs by the Subs and other Wessex groups. When Shrapnel were up for a second demo tape, it made sense that they do it via Bluurg.

Stewart: "That came about because after seeing The Subhumans for the first time in '82, we gave their roadie (the infamous "Pete the roadie," a man worthy of a book all to himself) a copy of our first demo. Then a few of us started hitchhiking to a lot of their gigs so we became quite friendly and did a few gigs with them and Organised Chaos (another Warminster band). We decided to record another demo and asked Bruce (Subhumans guitarist) if he'd 'produce' it for us. So he did and as a result of our friendship with The Subhumans, Dick asked if we'd like to release the tape on Bluurg."

The result was the *Restricted Existance* tape. Despite its fairly raw recording, the demo is probably as good in terms of quality as any of their later recordings. Short blasts of angry punk, they often used interesting guitar interplay and a variety of musical ideas rather than just relying on thrash.

Stewart: "We had a good laugh from what I remember. Bruce came down the night before the recording, we played him the songs we were going to record, and we probably got drunk. We went to the recording studio (a small 8 track place in the Welsh valleys) the next day. Bruce made a few suggestions which we totally ignored, he helped out with the mix (I think), and it was all done and dusted in one day. Then we went home and celebrated. To be honest I can't really remember why it was called *Restricted Existance*. This was 21 years ago, but I suppose it was because there was a song of the same name on it and we sang about suitably punk rock issues as unemployment, violence, and the threat of nuclear war."

Through making regular treks up to play in Newport, the group became friends with a promoter named Karl who also ran Words Of Warning Records. Mostly remembered for his work with Oi Polloi and Cowboy Killers, Karl expressed interest in working with Shrapnel.

Stewart: "We knew Karl who ran Words Of Warning 'cause he booked gigs in Newport, and he was always at gigs that we went to. He saw us a few times, gave us a few gigs, liked what we were doing with the new lineup, and asked us to release something on his label."

Doing a series of split 7" records, Karl

introduced Shrapnel to another Welsh group named Symbol Of Freedom.

Stewart: "Symbol Of Freedom was a band from Pontypridd (Welsh valley town). We were introduced to each other at a Butthole Surfers gig in Newport (around 1985) by Karl. We bumped into each other at gigs, so Steve from Symbol Of Freedom (who later joined us on bass) asked us to record two tracks for a split single he was releasing."

The resulting split record is some of Shrapnel's best music. Great aggressive punk that in some ways brought to mind a more tuneful Flux with slightly metallic guitar parts, their two tracks, "Fact Or Fiction" and "They Are Wrong," almost seem out of place against the atonal thrash that was becoming dominant by 1985.

Stewart: "As usual we were held back by financial limitations so we had to get everything done in one day, it was a reasonably enjoyable experience but frustrating all the same, because we knew we could get a better recording if we had the money to use a better studio and more time to do it in. I just listened to it for the first time in years and like a lot of records of that time it's not recorded that well, but it's a fair representation of how we sounded around '85/'86.I like the artwork for the sleeve though."

Despite the fact that the anarcho audience was changing with some of the original participants moving on, new kids were just getting involved and as a result the record sold a respectable amount, joining the many out-of-print titles from this scene.

Stewart: "I'm not really sure 'cause Steve sold a lot of them through various sources. I can't remember it being slagged off or anything so the response must've been okay. It was a strange time for us because shortly after we recorded it our bass player left (the day before a big London gig, of course) so Steve (Symbol Of Freedom) joined us and we got an extra guitarist (Ivor) in. After this lineup change we decided to drop all our old material apart from one song, so we'd be doing gigs playing completely new songs and trying to sell the old single."

Though never recording a full length LP, the group at this point was mostly focused on being on the road.

Stewart: "Touring was always a real laugh, despite having to do it on a shoestring. We'd just set off and see what happened, usually with a few mates in tow. We did three full tours: Ireland with the Subhumans in '84, Britain and Ireland with Organized Chaos in '85 (though most of them had to hitch home after the British gigs 'cause they'd spent all their money having a good time) and Britain with Christ On Parade from Berkeley/Oakland in '88, at the end of which we split. We did three or four gigs in a row sometimes, but those were the long 'uns. It was great to visit Ireland when we did and to escape small town life for a while. We met lots of great people who put us up/organized gigs, etc., and despite some of the hardship we endured we still managed to have a good time."

In addition to the three major tours, there was no shortage of road trips and one-offs around the area.

Stewart: "We had a great time at most of the gigs we did (and a few disasters). Some of the things that stick out are: playing in the middle of nowhere in Camarthenshire and a load of hippies from the nearby teepee village turning up with carrier bags full of home grown grass and all of us getting completely stoned, a gig in Trowbridge which ended in a riot because they closed the bar early, culminating in our bass player and several other friends getting arrested and put in prison for a week. Being searched by the R.U.C. (police) in Belfast at gun point, taking loads of Welsh magic mushrooms with Christ On Parade on our day off and everyone having a whale of a time apart from the bass player of Christ On Parade (I think), who thought he had a mushroom stuck in his throat for about four hours. Getting drunk on lethal homemade potato whisky in Dublin and playing lots of great gigs with the likes of The Subhumans, Conflict, Broken Bones, Culture Shock, and Anti-Sect, to name a few."

Through Karl's connections, they were soon paired up for a second classic split record, something more common to those times.

Stewart: "The split came about because a lot of the early releases on Words Of Warning had two or more bands on them, probably because Karl knew a lot of bands and wanted to release stuff by as many of them as possible. We'd never even heard/met Toxik Ephex before the single. They were from Scotland, which is fucking miles from Wales. We did a gig with them and the Cowboy Killers at (the legendary) T.J.'s in Newport around the time of the record's release and it was a great night. They were really nice people from what I remember and many ales were drunk."

Acts Of Desperation didn't feature the band's best recording. But their side of the split indicated a musical shift with more grooves and funkier rhythms than before. It was an unusual move for a punk group whose previous record was more reminiscent of early anarcho bands. Especially on the track "Trivial Pursuit" it

seems like the band is stretching out in some new mysterious direction.

In fact, because of this record, it's hard to imagine what a Shrapnel full length would have actually been like. Who knows what form their musical growth would have manifested itself in?

By their peak, the anarcho scene was at the same time becoming diluted by the number of bands, but also much more defined and practiced, making touring a much easier prospect than getting a record out.

Stewart: "The anarcho/underground punk scene was very healthy at the time ('82-'88) because there was a whole network of people who were organizing gigs, releasing records, etc., so if bands wanted to tour it was just a matter of contacting these people and asking if they wanted to put a gig on. I don't know if I felt part of a scene as such, but I certainly regarded myself as being a punk. Towards the end of the band because more people were getting in touch with us and asking us to play and release records, the more I felt part of something, as we were meeting even more people who were involved with the punk, Anarcho/hardcore scene or whatever people would like to call it."

With not many bands to relate to in their own town, Shrapnel still forged many kinships, mostly from meetings in the quantum world of touring.

Stewart: "Most of the bands we played with were friendly enough and we bumped into quite a few of them on our travels—Conflict, Chumbawamba, Amebix—but I suppose we were closest to The Subhumans, Culture Shock, and Organised Chaos, 'cause we did quite a few gigs with them and spent a lot of time with them outside of the band."

Their friendship with Conflict led to their inclusion on the *We Won't Be Your Fucking Poor* compilation on Mortarhate. Completing a trilogy starting with *We Don't Want Your Fucking War* and *We Don't Want Your Fucking Law* (both on Fight Back Records), the double LP also included tracks by Oi Polloi, Statement and Revulsion.

Stewart: "We were on a compilation that came out on Conflict's Mortarhate records in '85/'86 called *We Won't Be Your Fucking Poor*. It was a double album featuring the likes of Sacrilege, Political Asylum, D.O.A, Conflict, and lots of other punk bands of the day. It came about because we'd done a few gigs with Conflict and they asked us if we'd contribute a track. Unfortunately, we could only give them the track "Unjustified Actions" of the aforementioned *Restricted Existance* demo, as we hadn't recorded anything since then. It was good to get something on vinyl though."

The band did a third and final tour with the Bay Area's Christ On Parade and then came to an abrupt end.

Stewart: "We were on a bit of roll during 1988, getting offered more and more gigs (including our first German tour, lined up for December), so it came as a bit of a shock when our guitarist, Ivor, said that he wanted to leave after our British tour with Christ On Parade. He said he couldn't handle the traveling and all the other stuff that came with constant gigging, but we respected his decision, even though it saddened us 'cause he was a nice bloke and a great guitarist. Unfortunately, as the tour got underway it became obvious that Steve (bass player/lyricist) didn't want to be there either. I won't go into detail as it was a long time ago, but things got so bad that by the time we got to the Newcastle gig (two gigs from the end of the tour) we were so pissed off with him we gave him his bus fare home and told him to go on his (not so) merry way. We got our mates Lifecycle to do the last 2 gigs and decided to split. Steve talked us into doing one more gig about a week later in Swansea University, which we agreed to, but when we got there our hearts weren't really into it so we went on first, announced it was our last gig, got really drunk and that was the end of that."

Though always a promising band, they never did record a full length and most of their songs are now lost in time.

Stewart: "I look back at that period with great fondness. We had some good times, visited lots of places we otherwise wouldn't have, and met some great people/bands. As far as the music goes, the records could have sounded better but on a good night we were a decent enough live band. What the fuck, it's all punk rock, innit? In hindsight I'm glad we split when we did because I felt that during the ultra politically correct mid/late '80s, a lot of people had forgotten about having a good time and were too hung up on politics.

"From a musical point of view I think anarcho punk was pretty much like the first wave of punk. There were some great bands and records, and some terrible ones (it's all a matter of personal taste though). I still listen to a few of them once in a while. I saw some of the best gigs I've ever seen in all sorts of unusual places (Crass, in a youth centre in Port Talbot being a perfect example). I think a lot of people (myself included) became politically aware as a result of listening to certain bands from that era and had their eyes opened to issues they would not have heard about otherwise, such as vegetarianism and the peace movement. People also realized that it's possible to do things outside of the established music industry, like organize gigs yourself, and record and release your own records. I think it was an important, influential musical force in its day. I would think its relevance would vary depending on who you ask, but it was very important to me during a particular period of time, a long time ago."

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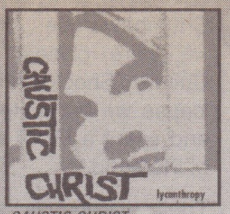

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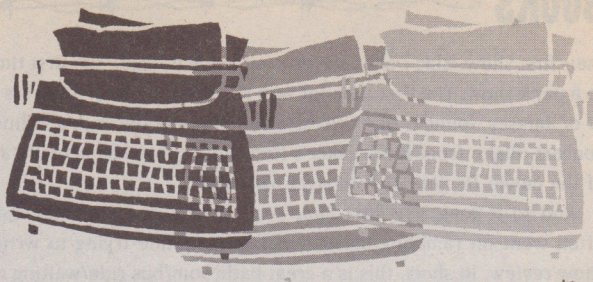
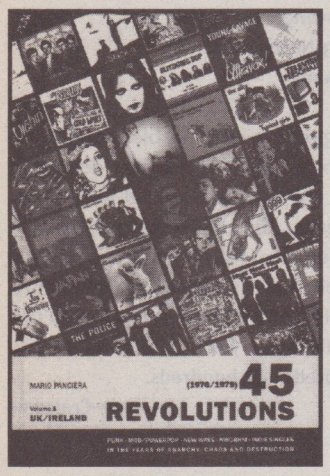




45 Revolutions, Volume 1: UK/Ireland
Mario Panciera
1,190 pages • $115 / 85 Euros
Hurdy Gurdy Books
www.hurdygurdy.com
(US order from www.ryebread-rodeo.com)

Yes, the already infamous *45 Revolutions* book lives up to the hype. The first volume of what's promised to be a series of discographies, this mammoth book bills itself as "The bible of Punk, Mod, Powerpop, New Wave, NWOBHM, and Indie Singles 1976-1979." Like the faithfully religious with his/her Bible, you'll undoubtedly spend countless hours pouring over the pages of this monstrous book.

This edition only tackles UK and Ireland and still comes in at 1,190 pages—that's a 4.5-pound book. Big. Enormous. The stats: over 2,000 bands/artists covered, over 3,000 singles (and *only* singles—7"s and 12" singles), 4,500 picture sleeves and labels in full color, another 2,885 in black and white. Impressive and expensive, to say the least.

When you're spending over $100 on a reference book, you're paying for the information within, right? I mean sure, this book is built to last with its hardcover, nice, heavy stock, two sewn-in bookmarks—and it looks nice. Most importantly though, it more than delivers the goods where it counts—in the record listings. Not only is the book comprehensive in scope, but the book delivers in depth as well. The detailed descriptions prove the author (and his cohorts) did his research.

Each listing begins simply enough: band name, a picture of the cover, the title of the songs (with songwriters' names), the month and year the record was released, the label, catalog number and information on the picture sleeve and variations. This quick rundown is followed by a vague "collectability" rating, ranging from one to five stars: extremely common to ridiculously rare. This was wisely done in lieu of a price guide, helping keep the book relevant longer. It's a somewhat loose guide, meant to be just that and not a hard-and-fast number for record stores, sellers, or buyers to hang on, which is a real pitfall of traditional record price guides, especially in the day of eBay.

Following the quick and dirty, raw information, you get into the meat of the listings, the comments, band histories, pressing information, member lineage, and other crucial information. While much of the information relates as directly as possible to the record's description, the author squeezes in plenty of incredibly researched information about the bands. When more than one record for a particular band is listed, the information is spread across the write-ups. As an added bonus, original reviews from music magazines of the time appear at the bottom of the listing.

The starting period for the listings begins in October 1976 and the cut-off hits December 31, 1979. A few records released before and after make it in, some on technicalities (recorded in '79, but released in '80) or because they are of particular importance/note (Heavy Metal Kids 7"s from '75 and '76 get mentioned, for instance).

Panciera includes a wide range of genres in the book: punk, indie, mod, power pop, new wave of British heavy metal, and privately pressed singles. He does not include acetates, nor reissues released in the timeframe of the book. Reggae, rockabilly, pub rock (pre-'76), glam and glitter rock, prog, disco, soul, funk, and football singles didn't make the cut. And yet you still have almost 1,200 pages of listings and picture sleeves.

Because this volume of *45 Revolutions* focuses exclusively on UK and Ireland, it's not yet time to retire your tired, dog-eared copies of *Volume: International Discography of New Wave* or *FLEX*. But if you consider yourself in the class of scorned, frowned-upon punks known as collector scum, this book is pretty much essential. And given that there were only 1,000 printed, when it's gone, it's gone...the price will only go up. I don't know many people who bought the book that would be willing to give it up, ever. I know I plan on spending many fine years ahead with my copy.

As an addendum, one of the main contributors to *45 Revolutions*, Steve "lowdownkids" Mitchell has created a related blog, (45revolutions.blogspot.com) which features MP3s of the harder-to-find obscurities mentioned in the book. Given that there are so, so many records listed and many that you and I will never see, let alone hear, it's a real treat to get a taste of the hyper-rare single now and then. Some are incredible, others horribly ordinary. Still cool to get a listen without having to drop serious cash. And for those hesitant about buying the book, the blog offers a (very small) sample of what's included.

—Mark Murrmann

My First Time
Edited by Chris Duncan
196 pages • $15.95
AK Press
974-A 23rd St
Oakland, CA 94612
www.akpress.org

Forty-five people share the story of their first punk show. This book should sell itself based on its subject and list of contributors—Chris from RKL, Boff from Chumbawumba, Joe Queer, Pete Sticker Guy, Al Quint, Scott from Neurosis, the Gervasi Brothers, Paul from Crimpshrine, Ben from Econochrist, and so on...

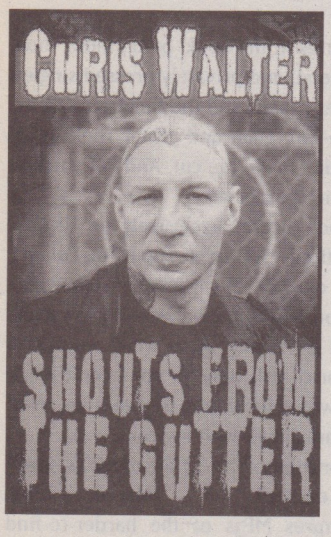
The majority of the stories all ring similar. Somewhere between 1985 and 1989 an outcast comes across a portal to a new/scary/exciting underground world and in it finds their true calling. Most people reading *MRR* can relate to this scenario and it is fun (and a little embarrassing) to relive it through others.

There are also some great left-field accounts of what some considered

their first show. Blag Dahlia never even made it inside the first time he went to a punk show. The first time for Ann Kanaan (the *AK* in AK Press and mother of Ramsey, founder of AK Press) was being a bouncer at a Political Asylum concert. Blake from Jawbreaker's first punk show was actually a screening of the movie *Decline of Western Civilization.*

And so it goes...*My First Time* reads like a '90s-era zine where editors often went on rambling blustery narratives while trying to write a simple show review. In short, this is a great bathroom/bus ride/waiting room read.

—Craigums



Shouts From The Gutter
Chris Walter
236 pages • $16.00
Gofuckyerself Press
www.punkbooks.com

This collection of short sharp shocks races the reader through the seedy underbelly of Winnipeg, Vancouver, and Western Canada. Before you roll your eyes, oh homesteading punk in some big city US ghetto, Winnipeg and especially East Vancouver have junkie- and whore-filled neighborhoods that rival San Francisco's Tenderloin and NYC's pre-gentrification Bowery. Chris Walter, a survivor of the life who came up in punk rock as well as booze, powder, and needles, presents dozens of short stories and a couple of brief poems that snap and crackle on the page.

Like his hard-bitten literary antecedents Charles Bukowski and Donald Goines, Walter writes partly from imagination and partly from his own experiences. This patina of reality brings his characters to life and forces the reader to identify with the junkies, thieves, murderers, alcoholics, prostitutes, pimps, and other human flotsam that inhabit these stories. And like Bukowski and Goines, Walter writes in clear-eyed language that doesn't hide the ugliness of the characters while ensuring that the reader cares about people whom proper society consider "low-lifes."

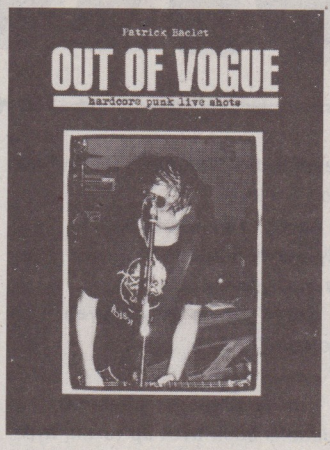
Another similarity between Bukowski and Walter are their poems. Both write poems for people that can't stand poetry. Frank, straightforward ideas couched in a few well-chosen words that leap off the page and make their point with a bang. No hesitation, no extraneous verbiage, and then on to the next piece.

Hard luck cases crossed with malcontents and listless victims of addiction and/or poverty are scattered across these stories- with only a few exceptions. One about an escaped murderer reminded me immediately of sci-fi/fantasy writer Frederic Brown, who pumped out many quality one-to-three-page stories with surprise endings. Most of Walter's stories, however, don't end as tidily as Brown's. This unpredictability keeps the reader guessing. The variety of subjects, storylines, settings, and characters show Walter's strengths and imagination.

Earlier this year I reviewed his latest novel, *Welfare Wednesdays*, and was astonished at his ability to turn a tale of hopelessness and degradation into a hopeful celebration of life. The many stories in this collection do the same thing, and their brevity forces the usually loping Walter to gallop. Thankfully, he can sprint through the short story structure successfully, as well as stretch out for the length of a novel.

Shouts From The Gutter is more proof that Chris Walter is one of the underground's leading fiction writers, along with Michael Muhammad Knight, Charles Romalotti, and Aaron Cometbus. And like Cometbus' *Despite Everything; Cometbus Omnibus*, this is a perfect book to keep by the toilet for when the kids have to be dropped off at the pool!

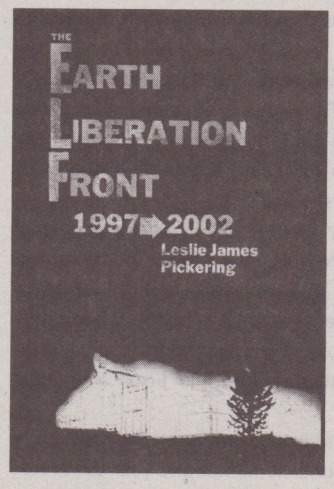
—Jesse Luscious



Out Of Vogue: Hardcore Punk Live Shots
Patrick Baclet
140 pages
Syntax666
Katzwanger Hauptstr. 42
90453 Nüremberg
Germany

130 glossy pages of black-and-white photos taken over the last decade at punk shows in and around Nuremberg, Germany. The title refers primarily to the author's taste in music and fashion as well as his approach towards photography (he remains loyal to his analog equipment). Chances are, you won't be picking this book up for the author's philosophy, you'll be picking it up to look at pictures, of which there are hundreds and hundreds.

—Craigums



The Earth Liberation Front 1997-2002
Leslie James Pickering
237 pages • $17.95
Arissa Media Group
www.arissamediagroup.com

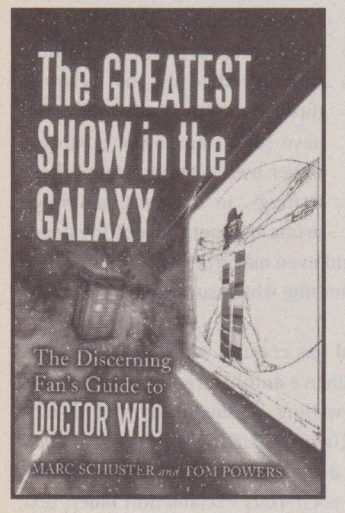
Apparently Leslie James Pickering thinks that this book will only appeal to people who were "throwing tear gas canisters back at riot police and sitting in old growth redwoods in the Pacific Northwest in the late 1990s." Luckily, that's totally untrue. While I understand Pickering saying that this book was essentially written only for the tree-sitting types—after all, the documents included in the book were written by activists, and it's important for this sort of compendium to be produced so that other activists can have a historical view of a movement that is decentralized and hard to keep track of—the material within is also really interesting and informative for those of us who were not part of the grunge-era forest defense set.

It seems as though in compiling the book, Pickering didn't bother to edit out a lot of things, which is great and makes everything really thorough, but I would advise reading in segments, or using it as a reference type book, rather than reading it straight through, since there is a lot of information in here. The book is divided into different sections—communiqués from Earth Liberation Front cells that are great and inspiring to read, but tend to get boring after slogging through fifty letters filled with "our winter elves brought Christmas freedom to our Animal Brothers while giving capitalism a big lump of coal in their stocking" rhetoric; a FAQ section which gives you a pretty good rundown of the ideology of direct action and the ELF; three accounts of events in which the spokespeople for the ELF were harassed by police and the FBI and brought to court; a horrifying look at the Subcommittee hearing on Eco-terrorism; some interviews, and a resignation

statement from Pickering when he stepped down as spokesperson.

A book like this is greatly needed in the activist community, both as a historical archive, and as a statement of solidarity with people who are involved with actions today. I think that, especially given the harassment we are seeing due to the Green Scare, Pickering's book is important to read, even if it can be kind of too much information at once.

—Thera Webb



The Greatest Show in the Galaxy
Marc Schuster and Tom Powers
207 pages • $35.00
McFarland
www.mcfarlandpub.com

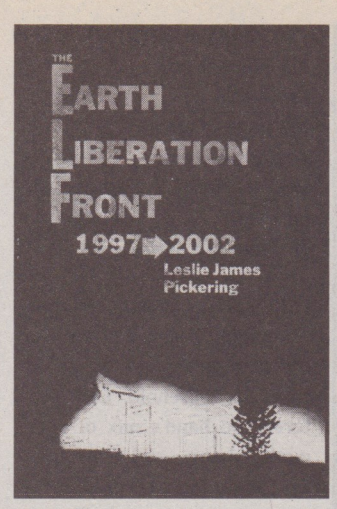
Lets face it realistically here people: *Star Trek* is for whinny losers and overall doltish douche-bags. And let me also add that *Star Wars* doorknobs ain't much better. The state of popular science-fiction is a sad sea of perpetual adolescence; the qualities that once made it so great, so endearing, so esteem-able in the past have been extinguished by a potent cultural retardant: you. So-called science-fiction no longer has anything to do with *science*—that should be the first indication that things aren't going the way they should. Instead, we get this meaningless and virulent culture spreading like pus through a junkie's arms, devoid of the remotest shred of intellectual content and appealing to contemptible wretches who are fond of buying stupid novelty toys made for adults. Production emphasizes mere appearances in an ironic simulacra; special effects, while essentially insignificant in the storytelling process, are gawked over by consumers despite being nothing more than insipid drivel appealing to that social class of people who are attracted to *shiny objects*. A big part of this is the result of our culture's divorce from printed matter; there is little pop-culture left that has no purpose other than milking the credulous and incompetent. Who's lamer anyway, Captain Picard or Luke Skywalker? Spock or Chewbacca? Who could fucking tell?! It's like an endless paradox serving only to piss me off!

For 26 seasons, the consistently brilliant BBC television series *Doctor Who* offered a genuine solution for all my painful woes of paragraph one. Where *Trek* and *Wars* failed as ineffective and fruitless drivel (Spock is a total poseur, he never said anything *logical* in his life), the Doctor truly delivers the goods. He's possibly the coolest hero/protagonist of any science-fiction series ever: a brilliant 500-year-old time-traveling scientist/philosopher who's as much a logician as he is a poet prone to acuminously witty Wittgenstein-esque word games and thinly veiled insults (Douglas Adams was a contributing writer for a period of the show). I'll spare going into too much more detail about the show here; just in case you actually *do* get hip, keep *The Greatest Show in the Galaxy* high on your "to-read" list. How could you go wrong with subject matter like this anyway?

Schuster and Powers wrote a surprisingly cogent work, considering it's just semi-academic fodder for fans of *Doctor Who* who need their interests justified. For the categories this book is no doubt going to find itself in, it is unbelievably entertaining...for a fan of the show that is. It does not make a good starting place for an exploration of the *Who*-universe.

I haven't enjoyed reading something this much for a while. The authors take a fantastic subject and manage not to fuck it up by putting it through the post-structuralist wringer (all the usual subjects in the post-war French "thinker" scene make their appearance; I'm sure you're happy to know this).

—Spencer Horne



TiPPiNG the SACRED COW: The Best of LiP: Informed Revolt, 1996-2007
Edited by Brian Awehali
269 pages • $18.00
AK Press
www.akpress.com

I first read *LiP* about a year ago—their "Vaguely Apocalyptic 'Waste' Issue." It was an entertaining read full of facts about waste and consumption, preceded by several arguments for primitivism. Exciting, no?

It was pretty cool, but there were several strains of generic liberalism that tainted the articles. *TiPPiNG the SACRED COW* is a new collection of the best from *LiP*. And what the hell does *LiP* even stand for? At the very end of the collection is the answer: *LiP*, as in "don't give me any." Sounds ambiguous and kinda lame. What saves the collection is the quality of the writing contained within.

The articles range from shoplifting ethics, interviews with The Coup (revolutionary hip hop group), madness and mass society, and other cool topics. The shoplifting article in particular was really interesting. It addressed a problem with shoplifting that I've had for awhile now.

I think shoplifting is fine from any corporate/chain store. Steal whatever the fuck you want. However, I have noticed that many punks want the really good stuff. You know what I'm talking about. The expensive shit from REI. Bourgeois treats from Whole Foods. $80 jeans from The Gap. But isn't this the same as the yuppies who pay for these luxuries? The same consumer drive is there. Knowing that you can walk into any store, and take whatever you want either by stealing or paying for it. That sense of entitlement—that you deserve the best.

And not everyone has the benefit of being a white shoplifter. Not everyone can be so invisible if only they dress up a little. The article touches upon many of these points, and more. I also learned there is an organization in Barcelona called Yomango, which means "I steal." "They combine their shoplifting with art shows, dinners serving only shoplifted food, and protests outside of stores." That seems really cool, and their efforts do not propose accumulation.

There are other good articles in the collection, although the above was my favorite for sure. Towards the end is a hilarious glossary with such terms as "go beige (verb): To come to a consensus that offends no one, but that produces nothing of value; to favor blandness and meaningless over anything potentially upsetting. Often considered offensive by those who are bland or meaningless." Or "orthorexia (noun): An obsession with healthy eating that can be used as a cover for your real eating disorder." It's sad, but the last one sounds like my mom.

Suffice it to say, the book grew on me the more I read it, literally. It was literally growing on my leg. Just kidding. Each article I read made me like the book more and more, and forget about the crappy cover and lame title. Most of the articles are on the short side, which is great because if you find out it sucks, you're almost to the end. Conversely, the good articles go right to the point without hesitation.

One complaint that I do have with the book is its lack of humor. Sure some parts are academic funny, but there are not that many jokes. The book is serious, real serious. And some parts should be, but others don't necessarily require that tone.

Overall, borrow it from a library (because they rule), or a friend. It might make a good present for a "radical" relative, i.e. washed up hippy, frustrated suburban artist, or promising know-it-all teenage intellectual.

—Dan Kaufman

The Replacements: All Over But The Shouting
Jim Walsh
304 pages • $22.00
Voyageur Press
Galtier Plaza, Suite 200, 380 Jackson
St. Paul, MN 55101

I love the Replacements. *Hootenany*, *Let It Be*, and *Tim* are in regular rotation at the Luscious household. Each captured the band's mix of rock, punk, whimsy, and pure energy. Surrounding records either didn't deviate from the "1-2-3-4 punk go!" or went straight into lame indie-rock/folk self-indulgence, but even those have some stellar moments any band would be proud of.

When I was assigned this book, I was looking forward to learning a lot more about a band that've been a constant soundtrack in my life. Editor Jim Walsh has assembled a ton of interviews from band members, friends, and observers of the Replacements into a pretty readable narrative. He was there from the start and remains friends with most of the ex-members. That's a good way for people who weren't there (or who were there) to figure out how and where a band fit into its local scene as well as into the wider music context. Hearing directly through the people who were there adds some fantastic details and context, especially from when the Replacements were just another DIY punk band. (This last point is pretty super, considering the later embrace of the Replacements by various indie-rock hipsters who otherwise blithely and preemptively reject such bands as immature and worthless!)

However, the sheer amount of trivia and personal reactions wore me out. I ended up skipping around, settling only on the intense section, which covers the premature death of founding member Bob Stinson. The pain, confusion, and guilt come through in the competing and often contradictory interviews with his bandmates, friends, exes, and acquaintances. Newspaper accounts are used to lay out some of the basic facts. Rumors fly about who, what, and why, like in any crisis or highly emotional situation. As horrible as the events were, the overwhelming feel of this section is one of people uniting in their recognition and love for a basically good, flawed human being. I recognize the conflicting accounts and confusion—so will anyone who's lived through the sudden death of close friends or family.

This section aside, the majority of this book is too densely packed for non-obsessive fans of the band. The breadth of people interviewed for this book is impressive and covers pretty much all of the band's history and various issues and quirks. Walsh does a decent job of stringing it all together in a moderately cohesive way, but it's such an unwieldy amount of information that perhaps he'd have been better off splitting it into two books—one for the deeper, hard-hitting subjects and one for the ridiculous tour stories and alcohol-sodden escapades.

I love this band, but I'm not going to slog through 300 pages of interviews to confirm that, for instance, the band could be transcendent live or horrible live. If I were a super-fan who needs to know every detail of Bob Stinson's replacement by Slim Dunlap in the band, or of multiple tales of drunken debacles, I would embrace this book. As it is, it's a book good for browsing through once in a while but there's no way anyone besides people with multiple Replacement tattoos needs to read this all the way through.

—Jesse Luscious

A Dangerous Woman: The Graphic Biography of Emma Goldman
Sharon Rudahl
128 Pages • $17.95
The New Press
www.thenewpress.com

Reviewing this graphic biography on Emma Goldman brought an interesting fact to my attention. It occurred to me, as I glanced through the first few pages, that I have seen Emma's life portrayed in her own writings, from other's writings, in sketches, paintings, prints, puppets, street theater, a traveling musical, a short "erotic" film, and even macaroni art, but never the medium of an illustrated biography—something which surprised me because it seems like such an original idea.

In just over 100 pages, Sharon Rudahl has created what amounts to the illustrated and abridged version of Goldman's autobiography, with a bonus ending (since Emma was incapable of writing posthumously and doesn't include the final few years of her life in *Living My Life*). *A Dangerous Woman* is a concise graphic novel sketching out a "best hits" of Emma's life. A lively set of illustrations, complimented by vociferous exclamation laden text, captures the energy and turbulence of Emma's vigorous lifestyle. Complete with cameos from most of Goldman's encounters with famous radicals and lovers, every page unfolds a new and enticing plot in this revolutionary's life. Rudahl tells Emma's life the way we all envision it: emotional, fast-paced, and provocative.

Emma's role in the failed assassination attempt on Henry Frick, her long affair with Alexander Berkman, and conflicts with still recognizable names like Voltairine and Most all appear in *A Dangerous Woman*. If you haven't read Goldman's autobiography then this is a great supplement, but even people familiar with Emma's life, like myself, can still highly appreciate this novel. My favorite part takes place when Goldman is in prison and has gefilte fish brought to her on Pesach. I chuckled out loud and thought of my friend who is a devout atheist, yet I see him every Saturday in Synagogue.

Rudahl's illustrations may fit with your vision of Emma's life, or they may contradict that vision, but they won't bore you. She illustrates like Ben Katchor (*A Jew in New York*) if his comics could take speed.

The thing that gets me about most work on Emma is that nearly everyone adopts Emma's point of view of herself: that she is all-important and correct in her grandiose view of herself. I hold Emma Goldman as one of my heroes today, as I have for the past ten years, but I feel confident that what Emma thought about Emma and what everyone who knew her felt about her are probably distinctly different realities worth considering. Rudahl seems to stick to the traditional view of Goldman and this is the only thing I wish were different.

Fighting fascists, attempted murder plots, inciting riots and, yes, even Emma "doing it" make this fast paced graphic novel more than Hollywood can handle. Don't be surprised if you read this in one sitting.

—Lowell Fletcher

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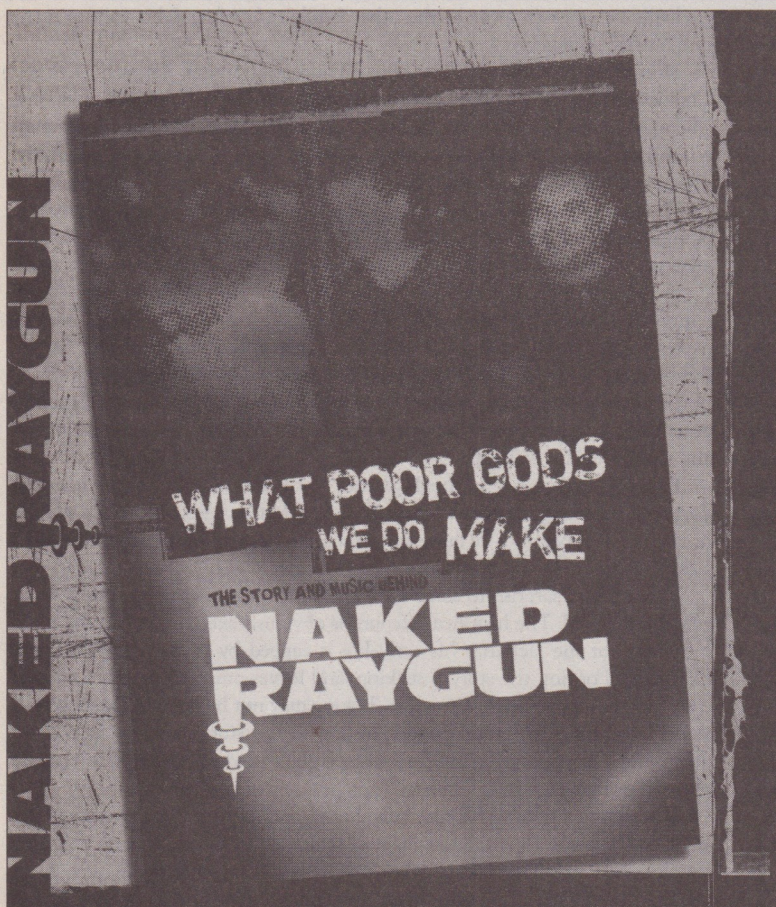

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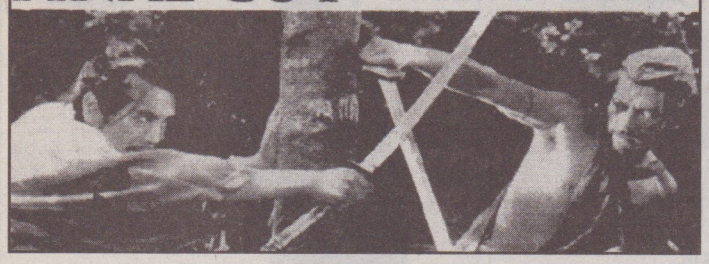


THE REVENGE BUSINESS

Ang Lee's movies run the gamut. He began with **Eat Drink, Man Woman**, a Taiwanese film so well liked that it wasn't too long before Lee made the trip to Hollywood—and what a trip it's been. He won the Academy Award for best film with **The Ice Storm**, then went back to his roots to direct the most financially successful foreign film ever (**Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon**). Lee wanders into Jane Austen-mania with **Sense and Sensibility**, and then earns your surprise with **The Hulk**. Of course, we'll never think of cowboys the same way after **Brokeback Mountain**. For this and other reasons, people pay attention when an Ang Lee movie comes out.

An NC-17 rating was perhaps the inevitable next step in an attention-getting career.

The NC-17 rating is given out so rarely that it attracts surprise whenever it appears, and especially with a big name director behind the helm. The rating comes with a certain problem—many conservative distributors are unwilling to release NC-17 product, so much so that it's not uncommon for some states or communities to bar the films from theaters. It can spell commercial doom in some cases, which is why the "unrated" DVD versions of films are popular. It's the one way around the MPAA's restrictive and often contradictory rating system.

Ang Lee's **Lust, Caution** is one of those unusual films to be released with the NC-17 rating intact (albeit to a small group of international theaters). It's 1941, the peak of yet another grim period in modern Chinese history. Japan has taken control of Shanghai (and nearly everywhere else in the Asian sub-continent), passing over control to the likes of Mr. Yee (Tony Leung, **Chungking Express**, etc.). He's a collaborator in charge of a local Gestapo of sorts, interrogating and often eliminating the poliical opposition—a job that involves him during the days and the very long nights. Needless to say, most fellow Chinese detest Yee, even if they're utterly powerless against him.

The artistic population regards him with particular disdain—a minority that's always being under watch. You'd hardly consider lovely Wang Jiazhi (Wei Tang) a revolutionary, but the enthusiasm of her small group of young actors fires her to an uncommon resolve. In the close quarters of their apartment, they hatch a plot to somehow gain Mr. Yee's trust, and murder him. As it happens, Mrs. Yee (the ever-brilliant Joan Chen) and Wang are mahjong buddies, and the busy Mr.Yee has even introduced himself once or twice (before excusing himself for torture sessions).

The members of the troupe are hopelessly naïve when it comes to politics, and this leads to the an early turning point. One of Mr. Yee's confederates uncovers the plot, and he wants to use the information to blackmail the actors to win sexual favors with Wang. This leads to the film's first turning point—the group has to decide quickly, just how far they're willing to go before using mortal force. As it happens killing is hard to do, on any number of levels, and afterwards, things are never the same.

The scene captures one of the film's special strengths—a frankness that approaches documentary reality.

Lust, Caution has gained particular attention for its sex scenes, most of them near the end. After **Brokeback Mountain**, it's interesting that the first scene is an extended sodomy sequence, and emotionally it's quite explicit (though simulated, of course). They're not a sex-for-sex's-sake device—to Ang Lee's credit, sex is purely a dramatic device, in some cases supplanting dialog. To be honest, this might have had more scenes of intrigue, but sex is a big reason a number of scenes are compelling.

At its core, **Lust, Caution** is a tale of intrigue that doesn't try very hard with its intrigue, which is surprising. The film works with compelling subject matter, and all the more because few if any dramas have addressed the issue of Chinese wartime collaboration. It's a troubling subject, and the French side (**The Sorrow and the Pity**) is still being examined. As **Lust, Caution** suggests, the period didn't lack for its share of tragedy and lost causes.

If **Lust, Caution** approaches revenge with a political conscience, **Milarepa** covers the same ground from a more transcendent angle. Thopage (Jamyang Lodro) is a young man who enjoys the life of a nobleman in Tibet, the scion of a family that has incredible wealth, albeit by medieval standards. When his father unexpectedly passes away, the family's fortune is administrated by a corrupt couple. Gradually the family's jewels (so to speak) vanish, and Thopage is left without a livelihood and on the edge of poverty. Meanwhile, the fortune is gradually being eaten away by the other family's gambling debts (not to mention outright thievery).

Things reach a pathetic low when Thopage's mother Kargyen (Kelsang Chukie Tethon) invites the clan to celebrate the boy's adulthood ceremony. There's precious little to share, at least by past standards, and the celebrattion is cut short when Thopage's so-called guardians leave. The home is left empty, the sting of humiliation in the air..

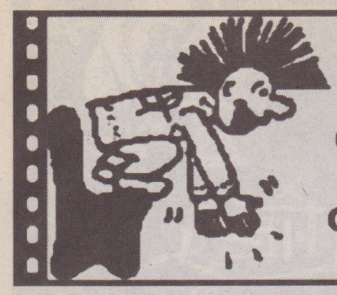
Thopage realizes he has few options—a slow, humiliating death by poverty, or taking up some kind of menial craft. In the end, neither is satisfactory, so he takes on what to us might seem like an unlikely calling. He becomes a sorceror.

A resident of Bhutan, director Neten Choking is said to be the latest incarnation in a line of Tibetan saints, which seems to be a rather striking way of making a living. His style of storytelling is generally straightforward, but he shows talent at producing honest parables informed by unquestionable devotion. His visual style shows a sensitivity for the unforgiving world of a thousand years past, an environment that demands complete discipline and sacrifice—and that's ideal for **Milarepa**.

Thopage begins his spiritual journey with Youngsten Trogyal (Orgyen Trogyal), but barely escapes with his life. Apparently, a new life as a sorceror-in-training is thought to be quite dangerous, but he wins his freedom thanks to a the merciful help of a magician's apprentice.

It will be no surprise to some that **Milarepa**'s story is based on that of an actual individual. The historical account is obviously sketchy, and all the more intriguing for the fact that his early life is capped by mortifying bloodshed. Exaggerated or not, the story is striking, and leaves one curious about a set of truly extraordinary events. Director Choking may not be completely successful at demonstrating the factual underpinning to the story, but he's spot-on in describing a surprisingly grisly Buddhist parable—and an uncommonly guilty pleasure at that.

Milarepa is a natural for film adaptation, and its restrained special effects want to boost you to an almost magical realm. Alas, most dramatic accounts conclude just after Thopage achieves his revenge; it's a satisfying ending, but it distorts the message of a basically anti-violent parable. The good news is that the second part of the story is scheduled for release at the end of the decade.



BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

INTEGRITY ABOVE ALL

I remember the first time I saw a Donkey Kong video machine. It was at the General Cinema at South Shore Plaza in Braintree, MA. I have no idea why this is one of the memories my mind had chosen to keep. I am sure at this point in my life I had played Pac Man and I know my friend had an Atari at her house. It wasn't like video games were that much of a novelty at that point. My friends and I tried to play Donkey Kong on that day, but we were instantly crushed by barrels and laughed about it. Yet, somehow that memory stuck. I even remember that we went to see Ken Russell's **Altered States**, a film where the main character uses hallucinogens and an isolation tank to try to discover the meaning of life. My friend's father took us to see it.

Even with that pleasant recollection I was still finding it hard to bring myself to see **The King Of Kong: A Fistful of Quarters**. Watching a bunch of video game freaks try to out score each other is not my idea of a fun night. But I went and although I was completely baffled at the egos, obvious cheating, cover-ups, and other insanity that goes on in the world of competitive video game playing, I thoroughly enjoy the film.

Billy Mitchell had held the Donkey Kong high score record of 874,300 since 1982. That year Mitchell was the record holder for Centipede. He and other gamers were assembled by Life magazine for a photo shoot. Mitchell challenged the then champion Donkey Kong player to a game. Mitchell scored his record while at the same time revealing the so-called champion to be a fraud. He lied about his record score. Mitchell's mantra then became that players need to be able to play in public to be declared champions.

Fast forward to 2003, Steve Wiebe has recently been laid-off from Boeing. He is looking for something to occupy his time and comes across Mitchell's Donkey Kong record. He gets a machine, sets it up in his garage and starts playing. Wiebe's wife doesn't seem to mind too much since she has seen him suffer many disappointments in his life and is happy to see him aiming for something that will make him happy. Then he breaks the record scoring over a million points on the game, something most thought would be impossible to do. Donkey Kong is believed to be one of the hardest video games.

Wiebe follows the rules of video game records official group Twin Galaxies, a group formed by Billy Mitchell and others to make sure gaming records are authentic, and sends them his videotape of his game to have his record recognized. His score seems to be legitimate. This freaks Mitchell out and since he has such close ties with Twin Galaxies, two men are sent to inspect Wiebe's Donkey Kong machine. They show up when Wiebe isn't home and his wife is leaving for work. Against her protestations and requests that they wait for Steve to get home, they tear apart the machine. They don't find anything wrong with it, but something else catches their eye. It is a box from Roy Shildt AKA Mr. Awesome.

As it turns out Mr. Awesome has a long going feud with Twin Galaxies who will not honor his record for Missile Command. He has also been an outspoken critic of Billy Mitchell. When Wiebe tells these "inspectors" that Shildt sent him a new board for his Donkey Kong machine when his died, it is declared that Wiebe's score could have been tampered with and they will not recognize it. Mitchell's record holds.

What follows in **The King Of Kong: A Fistful of Quarters** is somewhat of a battle between these two Donkey Kong players. Wiebe is constantly trying to prove himself. He goes to Funspot in New Hampshire to a gaming expo in order to show everyone that his score was legitimate. He proves it by scoring even higher; getting to the very rare last screen nicknamed the Kill Screen. But then something mysterious happens; Mitchell doesn't show up in person. Instead he sends a videotape with a suspicious glitch where the score is. He beats Wiebe by a couple hundred points. Mitchell is declared the champion.

But it doesn't end there. The competition and lack of it between Mitchell and Wiebe gets more absurd. Wiebe is constantly having to prove himself to Twin Galaxies judges, but Mitchell doesn't have the nerve to face him, never mind actually play him in a game. Of course, it is easy to figure out why. Mitchell has held the record for so long he is probably out if practice and would lose by a landslide. Even Mitchell's wife admits that she has never seen him play a video game. I think it is just so lame that these two can't just play a game together and settle this for once and all. Then I remember that I am talking about a video game, so who cares? (http://www.billyvssteve.com/)

The British New Wave may not get as much attention as the French New Wave as far filmmaking goes, but there are so many fabulous British films from that era. While both New Waves focused on personal freedom, the British seem more aware of class struggles as well as well as challenging authority and the status quo. These themes will show up in punk rock years later.

One of my favorites is **Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner**. Colin Smith has been sent to a boy's reformatory after robbing a bakery. Colin has recently lost his father to an illness contracted while working at his factory job. Colin's mother becomes involved with the doctor who was taking care of his father. He moves in. Colin's siblings are constantly screaming. Colin is offered a job at the same factory where his dad worked. Of course, he's not going to take it. Faced with no future, he doesn't know what to do.

Then he meets Audrey. With his share of his father's insurance money he spends a great weekend with her at the beach. He wants to go back. She wants him to get a job and settle down. Instead, he robs the bakery and ends up at the reformatory.

While incarcerated, it is discovered that Colin is an excellent runner. As a result he becomes the favorite of the head of the prison, The Governor. There is an upcoming sports day with an upper-class school. The Governor wants to win a trophy and sees that Colin is his best chance. Colin is given preferential treatment and allowed to run on his own outside of the gates. It is on these runs that Colin recollects on the events of his life leading up to where he is now.

The ending of **Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner** is the most amazing "fuck you" to authority on film. Colin goes against human nature and denies his own ego and future as well as his possible freedom to stand up to the men who put him where he is. It is very simple, but most wouldn't have the nerve to deny yourself everything just to let the man know he can't control you. That's what makes it so perfect.

Dreams To Remember: The Legacy of Otis Redding is the simple, short yet fascinating story of singer Otis Redding. Redding was the son of a minister and grew up singing in church. He was hired as a driver for Johnny Jenkins to get him to the Stax studio. After much persuading, Redding finally convinced the Stax staff to let him a sing. When he did everyone was amazed at his great voice. He began writing songs with Steve Cropper of Booker T and The MGs and recording for Volt, one of the Stax labels.

Dreams To Remember: The Legacy of Otis Redding focuses on the amazing live performances of Redding as well as the memories of a few people close to him: his wife Zelma, his writing partner Steve Cropper, Stax founder Steve Jim Stewart, Memphis Horns' trumpeter Wayne Jackson and Redding's daughter Karla. Each recalls what a joy Redding was and you can see in his performances that he seemed really happy. I am glad to see an engrossing story of a musician whose life was not filled with drugs, sex, and abuse. His life was tragically cut short, but he seemed to live it to the fullest and best. The performances are shown in full, which is the way they should be seen. Redding was mesmerizing on stage, even if his wife jokes that he couldn't dance.

A good supplement viewing is **The Stax/ Volt Revue: Live In Norway 1967**. Recorded in what looks like a television studio with the young, baby-faced army soldiers trying to keep the teenage viewers in line, the Stax artists perform some of the best known songs. Featured are Booker T and The MGs, Arthur Conley, Eddie Floyd, The Mar-Keys, Sam and Dave, and Otis Redding. Each performer tries to get the kids to dance, but the army boys won't let them stand up. Redding comes back for four encores and during "Try A Little Tenderness" everyone finally charges the stage. (http://www.reelintheyears.com/)

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, PO Box 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146-0402. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area, let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. www.carolynkeddy.com

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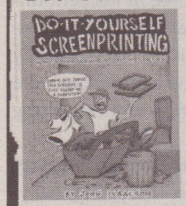

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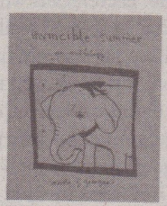

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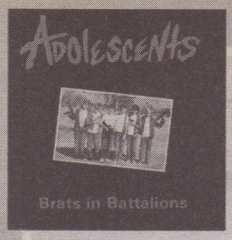

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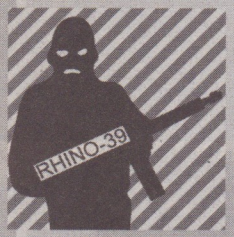

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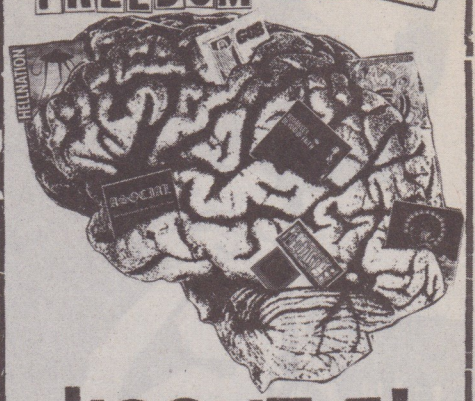

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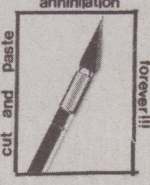

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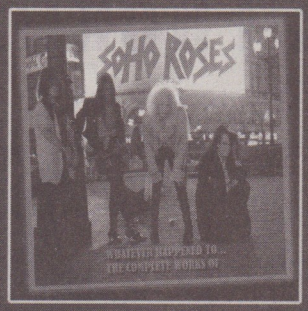

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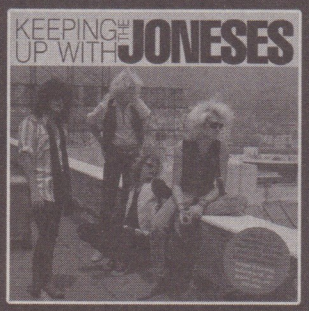

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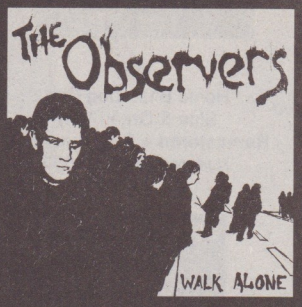

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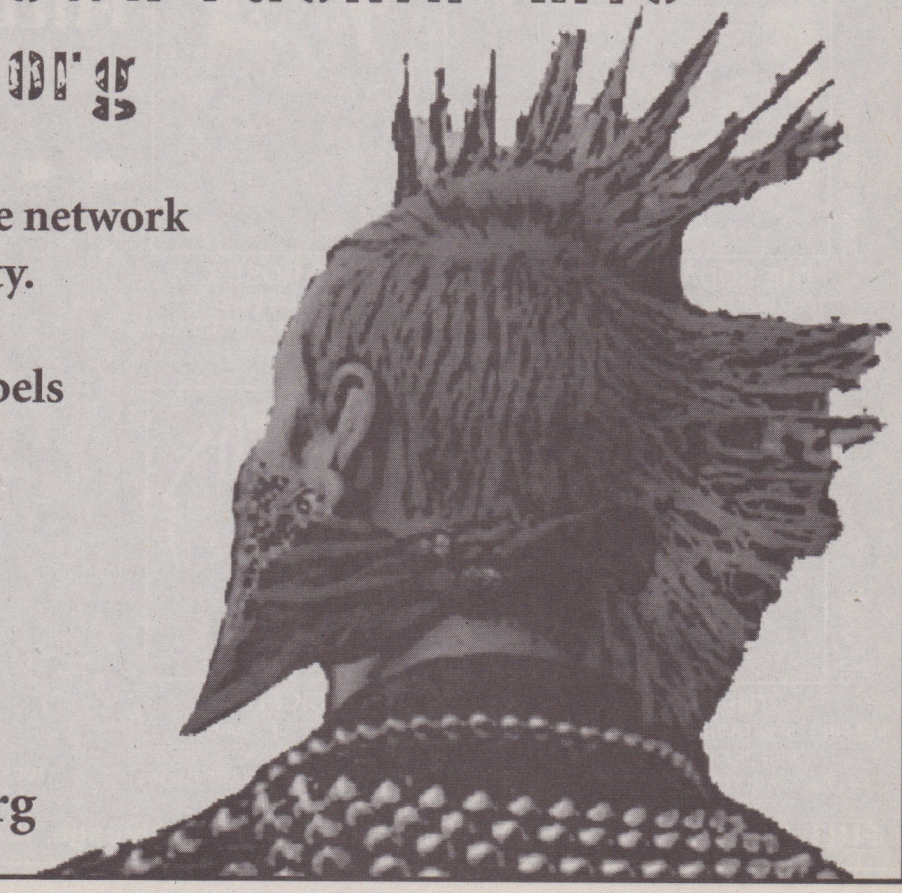

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86 MENTALITY – "Final Exit" EP

I love this band. Like NEGATIVE APPROACH or BLACK SS, 86 MENTALITY manages to represent the tougher, more furious side of hardcore without going anywhere even close to meathead territory. Assuming you already have the first two EPs by these DC hoodlums (something you should remedy immediately if you don't), this new six-track slab is what you've been hoping and waiting for during the nearly two years or so since the *On the Loose* EP. Some of the mid-tempo songs here border on being anthem-worthy, and others are pure punch-to-the-face hardcore blasts that will satisfy your angry side. If you're at all a fan of LAST RIGHTS, SOA, *good* British Oi!, or the bands above, then you should be all over this 'cause 86 MENTALITY captures the streetwise hardcore spirit like few others can do. (BG)
(Deranged, 2700 Lower Road, Roberts Creek, BC VOH 2W4, CANADA, www.derangedrecords.com)

ABNORM / RAJOITUS – split EP

Sweden's RAJOITUS has been kicking out blistering Finnish-style HC for over ten years now and this batch of three new tunes plus a KRUNCH cover is clear indication that they have not mellowed out with age. The production is filthy, and the pounding riffs are delivered with the precision of a drunken crusty wielding a sledgehammer. Good shit, as they say. ABNORM, who I believe shares a member with RAJOITUS, is more MOB 47 than DISCHARGE—faster thrash-style drums and shorter songs. I would've guessed they write about nuclear bombs, vivisection, and the like, but "Die Baby Die," one of the few tracks sung in English, has some pretty moronic lyrics about the singer getting his sorry ass dumped by a girl (sounds to me like he deserved it). This one's worth it for the RAJOITUS side. (CS)
(Fake Vomit, PO Box 12 01 52, 90108 Nürnberg, GERMANY, www.fakevomit.de)

ACTS OF SEDITION – "Crown Victoria" EP

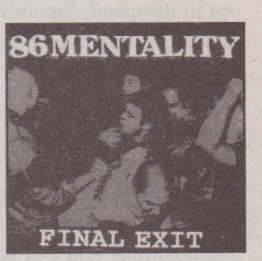
I should begin by stating that I've had the opportunity of witnessing ACTS OF SEDITION live a solid half-dozen times and while they were always good overall, I had never felt that my mind had been blown—with the exception of the drumming. It's been a while now since I have seen them, so cue this new EP...Holy flying Moses is this good! What we have here are six crushing tracks of (for lack of a better term) epic hardcore. To start with, get HIS HERO IS GONE, TRAGEDY, and FROM ASHES RISE references out of your narrow little mind right now. This is nothing like that as it's not crusty or metallic in any way. The guitar riffs don't necessarily sound anything like the first BORN AGAINST EP but they kinda have the same feel as some of the early '90s hardcore greats—fast with an off-center veneer. While the rumbling, wandering bass shakes the paint off the walls, those drums...so menacing and so fucking precise! The EUCHARIST LP on Mountain Records is actually a great point of reference. This EP has some serious fist-pumping breakdowns too and one in particular at the end of the song "Happy Thanksgiving, Grandma!" has this gradual transition into this vicious fast part that makes me wanna mosh *so fucking hard*! This is an amazing EP and these are some down dudes who, judging from all of my interactions with them, are most def total lifers. They also seem to always be on tour so if they roll through your town, go to the damn show! (JU)
(Bloodtown, www.bloodtown.com, www.actsofsedition.com)

THE ADORKABLES – "In the After Hours" EP

Suburban pop punk for all the kiddies who hang out at the mall and shop at Hot Topic. Highly produced "tunes" with a gore theme going on a la MISFITS, but too sappy and clean to make me in the least bit interested. The cheese is too thick on this release, making it a total bummer from the packaging to the production. These guys know how to play and the vocalist has a strong voice but the final "product" sounds like a Halloween store spook track. Strip it down and be a punk band. (MS)
(Devil's Hand, 412 Hidden Valley Road, Royal Oaks, CA 95076)

AFTER THE BOMBS – "Bloody Aftermath/Black Horse of Famine"

This record couldn't have shown up in my grubby (and I do mean grubby) mitts at a more perfect time. We've been rocking the fuck out of the first SACRI-



LEGE LP around the compound lately and you're not going to find a better reference point for AFTER THE BOMBS than that record. Blazing, perfectly executed crossover crust with gruff, reverb-drenched female vocals. This EP is a winner and if I had dreads, they would be whipping around in a head-banging frenzy right now. One original on the A-side and a spot-on ONSLAUGHT cover on the flip. (JU)
(Distort Reality, PO Box 80338, Minneapolis, MN 55408, skell_@hotmail.com)

AFTER THE BOMBS – "Spoils of War" EP

A smoking three-song EP of well played SACRILEGE-inspired thrash metal hardcore from Canada. AFTER THE BOMBS is modern in its speed, Japanese-style overdrive, and precision, but their sound is similar to late-'80s stench/metallic crossover (a la CONCRETE SOX, especially in the dropped-in solos). The riffs are undeniably metal, but the music has the raw edge of DIY hardcore with its shouted vocals and production values. *Spoils of War* contains lengthy, high-energy compositions and is a solid EP, but I wish the lyrics were less vague "war is coming, war is bad, hide Frodo, hide." I would prefer if they rose to the challenge of being more direct and political to the real circumstances of war, conflict, and turmoil that we have today. That's what made '80s bands with these kinds of lyrics brilliant—they were reacting to actual world events around them, and this vague, out-of-context approach seems more like total fantasy. Still a great EP that merits multiple listens at high volume. (KS)
(The Total End, PO Box 80 – Station C, Montreal, Quebec H2L 4J7 CANADA)

ALTERNATE ACTION – "We're Not Like You" EP

This is pretty much your standard skinhead material, complete with Oi!-charged street punk choruses and the occasional faux-English accent. These Canadians bang-out four tracks with topics ranging from the typical: hating the upper class, to the atypical: hating pedophile bastards. This is good, but certainly not groundbreaking. (CC)
(Longshot, PMB #72, 302 Bedford Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11211, www.longshotmusic.com)

ANGRY 4 LIFE / ULICZNY OPRYSZEK – split EP

ANGRY 4 LIFE hails from San Jose, CA and shares members with WHISKEY SUNDAY. Their sound is not too different from that band—driving melodic punk, maybe a bit more upbeat. The opener, "Cycle," is a particularly strong and catchy number. The liner notes indicate one of the songs was "inspired by ASTA KASK," and y'know what? It wouldn't have occurred to me otherwise, but ANGRY 4 LIFE could easily be compared to that band as well, what with their simple melodies and anthemic guitar lines. On the flip, ULICZNY OPRYSZEK from Poland offers two tracks of good ol' meat 'n' potatoes punk. They've got that slightly mournful melodic sound that I often associate with Eastern European bands. All in all, a solid split. (CS)
($5 ppd US/$5.50 ppd Canada/$6 ppd Mexico/$8 ppd World: Cat Food Money, PO Box 10341, Austin, TX 78766, www.catfoodmoney.org)

ARMSRACE – "Cross Your Fingers For the Next Ice Age" CD

You can thank REFUSED for this one. Indie-hipster-douche-bags that thought it would be fun to start a band in order to grace the world with another epic sounding hardcore record. Sounds like circus music with hardcore singing over it. (PL)
(Imperial Wax, 34 Sedgwick Road, Hamilton, NJ 08690)

ARMY OF FLYING ROBOTS – "Life Is Cheap" LP

Scathing, scalding vocals dominate the torrential thrash waves of this UK band. The music builds momentum between breaks of cool musical experimentation and quiet moments, and then blast-beats its way through various levels of severity. The vocals are so over the top, they're near nonsensical—like RORSCACH taken to a cartoon level of muppet-ness, which detracts from the impact of the music. It almost sounds like they use the same vocal track for each song because there's nothing to latch onto to differentiate each song from the next. ARMY OF FLYING ROBOTS is brutal and extreme, with lyrics that edge of cornered storytime emo-ish-ness, but actually use historical context to create meaning about technology and greed. Great music, severe vocals, but too much of a good thing? (KS)
(Feast Of Tentacles, feastoftentacles@hotmail.com)

ARTIMUS PYLE – "Tonight Is the End of Your Way" EP

It's been a while since the last ARTIMUS PYLE release, and listening to this new one reminds me of how cool this band is. Big-time bass-in-your-face, barked vocal-ed, raging thrashcore! I love it. Looks as if this was recorded in Japan and has guest vocals by CROW! Also, this EP includes a pretty cool N.O.T.A. cover. (NM)
(Too Circle, 221 HI Home Kodaira 510, Nakamachi Kodaira City, 187-0042 Tokyo, JAPAN)

BACKSEAT VIRGINS – "Born Again" CD

My cup of tea here! BACKSEAT VIRGINS play fun pop punk that reminds me of THE UNLOVABLES and THE TRAVOLTAS. They have a gal/guy thing going on in the vocal department. I'm thinking BEACH BOYS and bubblegum. Pop punkers unite and fight! Hold those sweaters high! Great. (RL)
(Insubordination, www.insubordination-records.com)

BANDANOS – "We Crush Your Mind With Thrash Inside" CD

The thrash revival in all its forms is in full force and I'm not sick of it yet. As you can tell from the title, this is yet another band thrashing away. These guys are from São Paulo, Brazil and shred like CRYPTIC SLAUGHTER or early ACCÜSED. Ripping crossover that I listened to over and over. Tight and speedy, and a CD that has become one of my favorite releases of the year. They have been around since 2002 and have a couple of splits, but I was very excited to see a full-length on the way and now I wanna see them live. The guitarist played with ROT for a while and I think that's one of the strong points. Having been in a grindcore band before means he can play fast, write riffs that are interesting, and keep up with the rest of the band. The singer has that higher, sick, wet voice like the guy from THE ACCÜSED. Give this a listen. (MH)
(625, www.625thrash.com)

BARSE – " If You Can't Fuck'em Cut'em Up" CD

This is the third and possibly final long player from England's anti-PC crusaders BARSE. Their best by far, adding a much needed new dimension to their '77-worship. Way more rocking, way more full, and enough tunes to send even the most ardent crusty straight into the shower. Taking the cheeky wit and melody of FRANKY FLAMES, the bar room swagger of COCK SPARRER and a touch of that working class charm as perfected by THE COCKNEY REJECTS. A great farewell. (SD)
(Hell's Tone, www.lprhardcore.net/htr)

BERGENFIELD FOUR – "To the Judge" EP

One can't help but recognize that this band shares the same vocalist as Canada's FUCKED UP. All four of these tracks remind me of the aforementioned, however the guitars on this are much more dark and dirty, with

an almost mid '80s DC/Baltimore vibe a la REPTILE HOUSE or THE HATED. This is good stuff, but with Damian's distinct vocal delivery most people will probably just think this sounds like FUCKED UP. (CC)
(Lowdown, no address)

BETTER NEVER – "...Ever" EP

This is a really strange record. It has members of other bands including John Brannon from NEGATIVE APPROACH doing guest vocals. Every track has at least one of the seven guest vocalists on it and as far as the music goes its kind of mediocre. Sounds like they just decided to throw together a hardcore band, record it the same night, then press it to vinyl. This record is nothing but a huge disappointment for anyone who's checking out this record for all its guest stars. (PL)
(Better Never, 2441 18th St. Washington DC 20009)

BILLYCLUB – "No Justice" CD

This is your standard street punk. Any hint of good song writing on songs like "Fuckin' Hate You" and "No Justice" are smothered by the slick production. If someone were to start a band strictly based off their experience of attending one punk show, which featured THE EXPLOITED and AGNOSTIC FRONT (circa 1998), then they would probably sound like BILLYCLUB. (CC)
(CultJam, PO BOX 19, Gloucester, GL3 4YA, UNITED KINGDOM)

THE BLONDE GIRLS – "Husky Deluxe" EP

Herky-jerky, all-over-the-map art-punk with hoarse, screamo vocals. There are hundreds of ideas here, sometimes within the same song. It makes for pretty disjointed listening but when it all gels it makes a pretty interesting racket. Part FAT DAY, part CAPTAIN BEEFHEART, part CLICKATAT IKATOWI. Sound good? Good. (AM)
(The Blonde Girls, no address)

BLOODY PHOENIX – "War, Hate, & Misery" CD

Continuing where EXCRUTIATING TERROR left off, BLOODY PHOENIX blasts their way through 26 tracks on this outing like C-4 strapped to your delicate cranium, with the results being total eradication. Even though this lacks a lyric sheet, with song titles such as "Lost Sense of Reality," "Showered with Hypocrisy," and "Your Words Mean Nothing," it is safe to say inner personal struggles and lack of faith in mankind could be underlying themes. But what the fuck do I know, since you were going to buy this on the mere fact that it tears more ass than green enchiladas and two buck draft beers on a Saturday night. (JH)
(625, www.625thrash.com)

BORED TO DEATH – EP

You just can't go wrong with an eight-song EP from a Japanese thrashcore band that pilfered its name from a GOVERNMENT ISSUE song, now can you? The music is super fast, the production is low budget (and I mean that in a good way), and the singer belts out nasal blasts of barely intelligible lyrics in such a way that you'll be left drooling and wanting more when the record is over. These boys from Sapporo display an unabashed love for early Dischord hardcore bands, but they also show their own country's thrash contributions just as well. Imagine SMASH YOUR FACE and TOTAL FURY mixed with SOA and YOUTH BRIGADE (DC). My favorite song on here is "Pose as a Skate," an earsplitting denunciation of kooks who ride around with unscratched boards. You should already know by now that you need this, so write it down! (BG)
(Sorry State, 1102 N. Greensboro St., Carrboro, NC 27510, www.deadmetaphor.com/sorrystate)

BRAINWORMS / THE CATALYST – split EP

Curious that this split is on a label called Rorschach Records because the sound of both bands is someplace between the '90s sounds of bands like RORSCHACH and '80s emo. Both bands are from Richmond, VA and have similar influences of BORN AGAINST and RORSCHACH. They are more melodic than either of those bands and that's when I hear the '80s emo sounds. When I first dropped the needle on the BRAINWORMS side I instantly thought RITES OF SPRING. Not sure either band really grabbed me, but I didn't think either band sucked. (MH)
(Rorschach, PO BOX 14712, Richmond, VA 23221, www.rorschachrecords.net)

BROKEN – "At The Border" EP

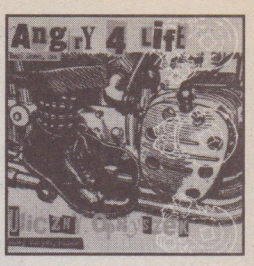
There are some bands that are so fucking stunning and powerful that words fail you! BROKEN is one such animal. These tough punks have been making this serrated edge, dangerous punk rock longer than most kids have known about guitars or politics! Jim Martin and his band of foul demons unleash "At the Border," "Hollow Threats," "Broken R' Dicks," and "Die" on you headbangers. Every tune gives off trouble and pain! The vocals and the guitar noise storm the fucking gates of Hell! This music has a face full of venom that has not mellowed with the years. The chug of the guitars is laced with steel and acid. The dark vocals will curdle the most refined bloodline. Embrace BROKEN on your way to your certain doom! Buy this record and dismiss your sunny optimism! (BR)
(Vex, PO Box 1271, New Haven, CT 06505-1271, vex.rex@hotmail.com)

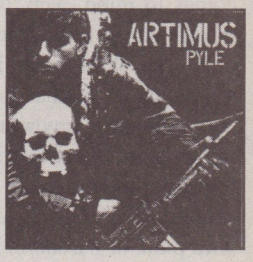
THE BUSY SIGNALS – "S/T" LP

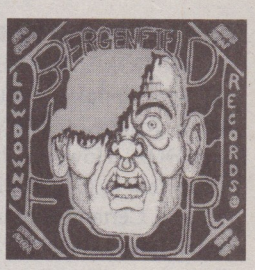
I think I may have declared THE BUSY SIGNALS as my new favorite band a few months back. Well if I didn't, I should have. This one will be quick. If you are a fan of punky pop or poppy punk that is mid-tempo, catchy as fuck, and has female vocals, then you absolutely must find this (and anything else these guys put out). Seriously, they are in a class by themselves. (KK)
(Dirtnap, 2615 SE Clinton Street, Portland, OR 97202)

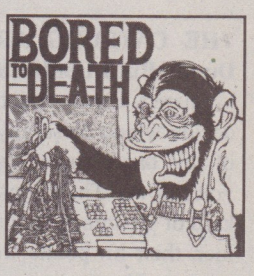
CADAVER IN DRAG – "Raw Child" CD

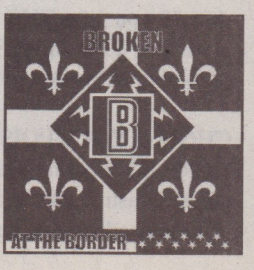
Somewhere between noise rock, psych, and doom.











Raw Child contains three tracks, none shorter than eight minutes and each having their own distinct ideas and sound. The first track, which is nearly 19 minutes long, starts out as straight, slow doom. It's repetitive and psychedelic but has a wonderful noisy feedback abandon that can make this sound work well. The second track is more noise rock—faster, noisier, not as heavy and always on the verge of falling apart. A heavier HALO OF FLIES comes to mind, well, except instead of two-minute songs they stretch it out to nine minutes. The third track is more experimental with a more minimal sound that takes its time and adds more keyboards/organ. It's refreshing to hear a band that is both eclectic sounding/experimenting, but also seems free and chaotic. This has absolutely nothing to do with punk or hardcore. I liked it a lot. (MH)
(Animal Disguise, PO Box 2191, Dearborn, MI 48123 www.animaldisguise.com)

CAPGUNS 'N' COKE / THE GRIZZLY ENDS – split CD

This split contains two UK bands. CAPGUNS 'N' COKE has the SCREECHING WEASEL thing going on. THE GRIZZLY ENDS is speedy melodic punk with a little horn action. I can tell this band has listened to their SNUFF records. A good split. (RL)
(Squinty Joe, www.squintyjoerecords.co.uk)

CAR BOMB DRIVER – "Evacuate" CD

CAR BOMB DRIVER has a good mix of old style punk—a little RAMONES *Too Tough To Die*, JOHNNY THUNDERS, and later DOA. However, lyrically I would categorize this in the "stupid" punk vein but in a fun way. Certainly not up to par with the mentioned bands, but this is a nice raw release. (RL)
(Car Bomb Driver, www.carbombdriver.com)

THE CATBURGLARS – "You May Be Dumb, But I Don't Care" EP

There's dumb and there's stupid. I can't decide which these guys fall under. The plus of this band: singer has the Chavo Pederast voice down. The minus: songs are sometimes kind of plodding—if they had a snappy drummer, their hit points would double, although on the mid-tempo songs, he's great. All in all, kind of dumb, kind of stupid, but pretty good shit. If you like THE ANGRY SAMONAS more than THE ZEROS, you'll like this. (JP)
(Cowabunga, www.cowabunga-rex.tk)

CHOOSE YOUR POISON – "Party Zone" EP

Side B was done before I sat down—three quick thrash tracks that are rippin' fast and had me headbanging right away. The lyrics to the track "Knuckle Dragger" also hit a chord. "Tough guy, tough guys, struttin' 'round the show. Why are you so pissed off, nobody knows," and later, "Save all your beef for Philly Cheese Steak / Your idea of fun is fucked"! I know Wisconsin is a long ways away, but when is this band going to make it to California? Think slower WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? or CRUCIAL UNIT. (MH)
(Poison Estate, 708 N. Lawe St, Appleton, WI 54911)

CIVIL VICTIM – "Civil Victim" EP

CIVIL VICTIM has a sound reminiscent of early 2000s hardcore. These Aussies would fit right in at one of Felix Havoc's Thrash Fests. The lyrics are simple, angry rants about things they hate like jock hardcore, fashionable punks, Nazis, cops, religion—I think you get the picture. This is *hardcore* and the production on this record is modern but the approach is classic. (CI)
(Affenfaust, www.affenfaust.com)

THE CLASH – "White Riot Tour 1977" LP

Relatively respectable-looking boot of a summer-'77-era CLASH show. You probably know what you're getting into with this situation; I can at least clue you in to the fact that there's twelve tracks and the sound quality's fairly decent. The set on this particular night included some of their hits ("Hate and War," "Remote Control," "Garageland") but also a bunch of the filler songs that made their way onto the UK version of the first LP (and were subsequently dumped on the US version, for the better in my opinion). Worth it for die-hard fans and completists. (CS)
(bootleg, no address)

CLOAK/DAGGER –"We Are" CD

This really reminded me of the HOT SNAKES in the energy and the fact that the John Reis/Rick Fork guitar influences are pretty obviously stated. I detect some early-'90s maybe late-'80s DC references too, maybe a Chris Thomson band or even SWIZ as they claim in the onesheet. I can kind of see it. It's not raging like SWIZ, more a trebled-out discontent. This is good enough but I bet after a few tours they will come into their own more and stop copping ex-members of DRIVE LIKE JEHU. I sound dismissive; I did really like this but I guess I just wanted more from it somehow. (LG)
(Jade Tree, 2310 Kennwynn Rd, Wilmington DE 19810)

CLOSET FAIRIES – "Ghetto Girls" EP

Three tunes, the first two sounding like a punk take on BIG STAR. I love punk and I love BIG STAR so this totally works for me. The last track is a brief little excursion into garage hardcore; I love garage and I love hardcore so yet again this totally works for me. I wanna hear more, but this is all they sent me. This record is way better than this review, so please do me a favor, the band a favor, and yourself a favor, and get this. (SD)
(Spent Planet, www.myspace.com/thecloset-fairies)

COATHANGERS – "Never Wanted You" EP

This is just horrible. I wanted to like it just on the basis that it was made by an all-girl punk band somewhat associated with THE CARBONAS or BLACK LIPS. I am biased like that. It sounds like a group of alterna-teen mallrats trying their hands at simulating THE DONNAS with added unbearably squealy grrrl vocals. Adding to that recipe for total boredom are some strangely anti-girl lyrics, and I mean anti-girl in the lamest bitchy teen-mag stereotyped idea of how girls act towards each other. Such a bummer of a record, not only is it kind of unbearable to listen to, it's dumb in a moronic tiresome way rather than in a rad snotty way. (LG)
(Die Slaughterhaus, PO Box 160168, Atlanta, GA 30316, www.dieslaughterhausrecords.com)

COFFIN BOUND – "Walkin Out On You" EP

I can't make up my mind on this one. On one hand, they have a rather lame, semi-goth name and the dull, computer-generated cover only emphasizes it more. On the other hand the music is rather intriguing. Dirty garage tunes with a heavily accented singer. He sounds like DAN MELCHIOR used to, but with a bit more attitude. Yeah, this record is really growing on me fast. I like it. (CK)
(Die Slaughterhaus, PO Box 160168, Atlanta, GA 30316, www.dieslaughterhausrecords.com)

COMADRE / TRAINWRECK – split 2xCD

The first thing I would like to say is that putting out a double CD, who's combined duration is 27 minutes and 3 seconds, is an irresponsible waste. Come on now! First up is TRAINWRECK (the CDs are mislabeled) who comes off like a typical '90s style classic screamo band. They've got hooks and some really cool guitar leads, along with every cliché associated with the style, but I gotta admit, I could listen to this quite a bit before getting tired of it. Maybe because I've ignored this scene for so long and am in '90s nostalgia mode so…Here's one thing I don't approve of though, "more EMBRACE, FUGAZI's, and RITES OF SPRING's and less of everything

else, so let's just kiss until forever" Baaaahhh! I don't know where to begin! On the other unnecessary disc, Redwood City, CA's COMADRE fares a bit heavier but are also decidedly emo metal. It's heavy and chaotic not unlike a lot of the lesser bands that were around near the time that the first IRE 7" and CONVERGE's *Petitioning The Empty Sky* came out. This is a quality, albeit exorbitant release for what it is but generally wouldn't be something I'd enjoy all too often. (JU)
(Bloodtown, www.bloodtown.com)

COME ON FEEL – "Red Heart Beat" EP

Super sloppy Japanese punk—the kind we've come to expect from this label. Part DILLINGER FOUR (rocking sing-a-longs), MINUTEMEN (jangley guitars), and personal faves SANDIEST (slight mod-edge). It's got plenty of heart (no pun intended), but it's just a little sloppy and out of tune for these ears. Fans of the label will have this already, I'm sure. (TB)
(Snuffy Smiles, 12-A Kamikousaicho, Shichiku, Kitaku, Kyoto 603-8117, JAPAN)

CONTEMPT – "Who Needs Democracy" CD

An engaging blast of brickwall political punk. Musically, they follow the path roughly hewn by the likes of ONE WAY SYSTEM, GBH, or ENGLISH DOGS—melodic, rockin', and anthemic. Lyrically, they could be CONFLICT. This is an excellent release. Top notch. (RK)
(Active, BM Active, London, WC1N 3XX ENGLAND, www.activedistribution.org)

COPEATER / MURDER OF CROWS – split EP

There is something special about two-person grindcore, fastcore, or death metal bands. Well, at least I've always had a soft spot for them—IRON LUNG, POPULATION REDUCTION, GODSTOMPER, etc. When I first dropped the needle on the COPEATER side, I was pleasantly surprised. Techie grind! COPEATER plays super fast short songs that had me tapping my toes instantly. Then I looked at the liner notes, and it's just two people, one on guitar/vox and one on drums. MURDER OF CROWS has a completely different sound—slower and heavy in a different, doomy/crusty hardcore way. Both bands are from Madison, WI. (MH)
(Scenester Credentials, PO BOX, Iowa City, IA 52244 www.scenecred.com)

COUNTING THE DAYS – "Finding a Balance" LP

The singer of this band must be the most depressed person in the world. Every song is about being sad and lonely, and a failure. Come on buddy, cheer up! I'm sure you'll find something else to live for. The songs on this record sound pretty much like straightforward modern hardcore that is similar to bands like AMERICAN NIGHTMARE and COUNT ME OUT. There's not a lot of long intros and bridges that sent you into a trance with exception of one instrumental track. Pick up this record so you won't look like an idiot when it becomes all the rage on the Bridge 9 board. (PL)
(Assault, www.assaultrecords.com)

CRACKWHORE – CD

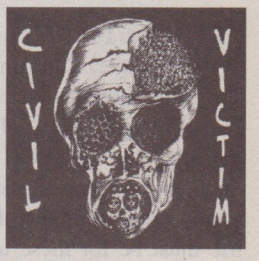
This wannabe abortion of a record doesn't even work as a joke. The first thing I ask myself when I see these pseudo-LA, "gonna make it, gonna make it" shit-rock bands is where do they get the fucking money for these 16-page, 75-color leopard-print CD booklets? Should I even bother mentioning the lyrics? Why not: "Too fast too live, too young to die, gonna burn out fast and make momma cry." Fuck *yeah!* Oh, and just to show that they don't play by anyone's rules, man: "Your wardrobe for the weekend makes you look so cool…you try to impress, but you don't know what to say." Yeah, this band's *totally* against bullshit, poseur images. Did I mention they do a DIVINYLS cover…seriously! What's it like hanging out with these dicks? I imagine being sandwiched in a booth at some Aussie equivalent of Jumbo's Clown Room between some coke dealer named "The Rev" and their roadie, "Daddy Hottt Rod." If you jerk off to Suicide Girls, buy this. (JP)
(Turkeyneck, 1/73 Vulture St., West End QLD 4101, AUSTRALIA, www.turkeyneck.com.au)

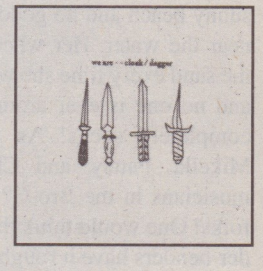
CRIME – "Exalted Masters" LP

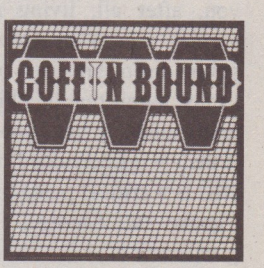
It's been, I dunno, 30 years in the making or something…no big deal, right? I don't know about you, but I hold CRIME in such high regard (best band *ever* from San Francisco?) that I was scared even holding this fucking LP. The obvious is not lost on me either, folks. *Exalted Masters* is the product of the surviving members getting back together in 2007, wrinkles and all, with a couple "young" bucks in tow to do justice to some (apparently) unrecorded tunes from the band's original era. I betcha that's at least 60% true, but whatever. I'll take it. Secondly, nothing on this LP duplicates or even attempts to mimic the divine, life-changing sound of their singles or endlessly booted demos, so get that hope outta yer head immediately if you're harboring it. It's impossible to pull off anyway. Yet, in spite of all of this, I can listen to this record and immediately recognize that it's CRIME…and I like it a whole hell of a lot. The attitude that made the band immediately recognizable on their classic '70s sides is still firmly intact. The guitars dual and strangle each other just as you would expect, the underlying groove never cracks and, well, they're just fucking bad-asses front to back on this LP. The only really obvious difference is that the vocals are drooled rather than spat, which is not (really) a jab at Johnny Strike's age. I'll just attribute it to the refined, wise, and weathered nature of this whole "CRIME as elder statesmen" vibe I hope *Exaulted Masters* instills in every new band out there that thinks they're the shit. Because they're not—CRIME is. (MC)
(Crime Music, www.rudosandrubes.com)

CRIMINAL DAMAGE – "No Solution" LP

Their first LP was high on my top ten list for 2006. This one's shaping up to be another winner. Catchy, no-frills UK82 anthems to get the punks' fists pumping. This time out they tackle external issues like war and the (upcoming?) draft as well as internal strife and angst. Singer/guitarist Paul Burdette seems to be able to churn







out these gems effortlessly. The music seems slightly darker on this record ("Empty Eyes" in particular has a gothic, TSOL twang to it) and the songs didn't instantly grab me the way they did on the first one. That said, the opener on side two, "The Heat," is a fucking scorcher. I love this band. Hopefully one day soon they will make it down to the Bay Area to play a gig or two… (AM)
(Feral Ward, www.feralward.com)

CRITICAL PICNIC – "Beat Women" EP

Westminster, California has materialized a complete anomaly—an angry band (they are from Orange County, why wouldn't they be?) that includes a crippled female vocalist with three transsexuals backing her up. This is totally crazy shit! Just think how rough O.C. life must be for these totally brave outcasts. Imagine vocalist Brandy pushing her way through palm-lined streets to get to a beautiful sunny beach and no goddamn ramp to get her near the water. Her wheelchair gets stuck in the sand every time she wants to soak her feet, and no one is ever around to help her—this completely sucks! As for her bandmates, Mikella, Pattsy, and Chrissy, three tranny musicians in the Bro-C? This is rough livin' folks! One would think the most urban of gender-benders have it rough, but I lived in SoCal and those city slickin' chicas got nothing on you, after all, living next to conservative loonies a la Wally George would make any young disenfranchised person go punk. Sadly, I must admit that this highly odd but conceptually amazing band can't write a ripping tune if their wigs depended on it. CRITICAL PICNIC is a critical piece of shit. (MS)
(Smoke a Sausage, smokinbarrelrecords@gmail.com)

CROSSED EYES – "Rattled" EP

Shit, I nearly walked out on this gem. It just goes to show ya not to turn your back to fate my friend—bad things happen. Atmospheric punk rock, soaked in that heavy, forboding sound as perfected by THE OBSERVERS, driven with the punk rock edge of THE PEDESTRIANS, and some of the straight-up pop hooks of THE ADVERTS. Five tunes of classic-sounding punk perfection. I can feel the hype already; best damn thing I've heard in years. (SD)
(Sorry State, 1102 N. Greensboro St., Carrboro, NC 27510, www.deadmetaphor.com/sorrystate)

CROSS LAWS – "Ancient Rites" EP

This is the second official EP from CROSS LAWS. They honed the sound just right on this one. It's perfectly raw as if every piece of equipment and possibly even the recording space were all transported from 1982. The buried melodic guitar bits are my favorite part of this band—every now and then they crest out more overtly and that's cool too. The six songs on this fly by, and then I am ready to play it again because it's that good, every song. I keep thinking that I am bored with the early-'80s revival, but occasionally I am surprised by great records like this. (CI)
(Sorry State, 1102 N. Greensboro St., Carrboro, NC 27510, www.deadmetaphor.com/sorrystate)

CROSS STITCHED EYES – "Rot" EP

Four tracks of mid-tempo hardcore with a backhand, heavy RUDIMENTARY PENI influence. The vocals are choppy Blinko/AMEBIX-esque, and the lyrics have a fantasy/horror bent mostly about human decay. The punchy numbers work well, but most of the songs draw themselves out about twice as long as they should. PENI's repetitive material worked early on because the songs were brief. CROSS STICHED EYES' two-minute-plus compositions lose the listener by droning themselves out. This becomes apparent on the track "Rot" which makes me want to lift the needle each time I listen through it. This song seems afflicted with the disease of three-piece bands that draw parts out because no one's standing in front going, "hey wait, I have nothing to do if that part goes on too long"—the keyboards didn't help. Still a solid EP with great musicianship and a nice tide-over until the next PENI record, but I hope the next recording distills and compacts the bands strengths for more impact. (KS)
(Ruin Nation, PO Box 10 58 24, 28058 Bremen, GERMANY)

CROTCH ON FIRE – "Anarchist Panthers" EP

Limited-to-200 one-sided EP, with some cool screened art on the other side. Seven brief songs are squeezed onto the musical side, and they go past in a blur. Elements of stop-start powerviolence (especially in the vox) but dashes of noise, thrash, polka, free jazz, etc. bleed through. You know, one time I ordered the STIKKY record *Where's My Lunchpail* from some distro and never got it. This record reminds me of STIKKY, or at least of something I would have ordered from a distro in 1988 or something. Unfortunately no lyrics were included. They're often my favorite part of music like this. (AM)
(Sick Thought, www.myspace.com/16908066)

THE DANGERMEN – "You Are Defeated" EP

The Australians have always known how to rock, especially when it comes to punk rock. It is undeniable. This is very Australian. It's got that fuzzy sound. It's straightforward and as much rock 'n' roll as it is punk. It's also got a certain DEAD BOYS sound to it. You know that spacey guitar sound that I'm talking about; it's right here. Touch it. (KK)
(Swashbuckling Hobo, www.myspace.com/swashbucklingrecords)

DANNY GLOVER – "Lethal Weapon" EP

Once again the man proves that he is just as good a singer as he is an actor. OK, just kidding. What we have here is an incredibly ferocious slab of hardcore thrash that is ugly, angry, and manic—the archetype of exactly how punk should be. Need I say I love this? Yet this fucking essential piece of primordial hardcore that would be venerated by all fans of bands like NO COMMENT, SICK PLEASURE, and POISON IDEA is limited to a measly 300 copies. From what I can figure out, since there are no lyrics or info included, the two main themes here are hating and skating. The drumming on this ten-song slab of wax kicks ass, and the powerful, raspy screams make you clench your fists while listening along. Everything about this is obscure. I can't even find an address for the label, but it's from the same fine folks who put out the silk-screened A.N.S. 7" not too long ago. Might be hard to track down, but make the effort 'cause it's totally worth it. (BG)
(Sick Thought, www.myspace.com/16908066)

DEAD MECHANICAL – "Medium Noise" CD

Solid debut CD from Baltimore's DEAD MECHANICAL that reminds me a lot of Australia's BLUE LINE MEDIC or perhaps a cleaner version of the first GARDEN VARIETY LP. In translation it means that there is a JAWBREAKER/SAMIAM meets JAWBOX influence going on here. This is well played but does grow a little old by the end of the disc. Still it is good enough that I am interested to see what this band is going to do in the future. (JF)
(Sex Cells, 253 N. Broadway Apt. 10, Portland, OR 97227, www.sexcellsrecords.com)

DEATHCYCLE / THE HOLY MOUNTAIN – split 5" EP

Fuck!!! DEATHCYCLE takes liberties with your brainstem on this split! You will feel thoroughly violated when the lads from New York come to minister their salve on your wounds! Follow the grim lyrics in "Ten Years Later." The words rip at your heart: "I wish I could ease your pain / I listen to you cry with death on your mind". These lyrics capture some of the helplessness many humans have

felt when their loved ones take a breakneck slide towards certain destruction. DEATHCYCLE emblazoned their song with more angst and discomfort in 1.5 minutes than most punks bands do in their entire career! You get it all – brute vocals with metal-tinged punk guitar blazing behind! Fucking brilliant! Side two of this unmanageable 5" slab features "The Holy Mountain", who has an entirely different axe to grind! Gruff vocals trim out full-fisted guitar devastation! Slow parts segue into mind-bending SABBATH-esque psych/metal! This is a very interesting Gloom Records release. DEATHCYCLE makes it worth the price of admission! (BR)
(Gloom, 1436 Ocean Ave Apt 2B, Brooklyn, NY 11230, www.gloomrecords.com)

DEM NASSTY HABITS – "Nasty Habits" EP
Breakneck 'tweener punk from either New Orleans or Atlanta. Who can tell these days??? It's immediately reminiscent of label mates KAJUN SS or THE FRANTIC, though doesn't fare quite as well as either. Still, a solid listen if you are into spilling beer all over really attractive women at your local punk bar. (MC)
(Die Slaughterhaus, PO Box 160168, Atlanta, GA 30316)

DEMOB – "Crime Through Time" LP
The first two DEMOB singles (*Anti-Police* and *No Room For You*) still stand as punk classics. The band reformed a few years back, and has released a bunch of stuff since, none of which stands up to their early tracks. I'm not entirely sure where all the tracks on this record come from (but the early singles are here). There could be some newer material, which blends pretty seamlessly with the old. All of *Crime Through Time* is rousing early-'80s street punk in the vein of COCK SPARRER or a more accomplished REJECTS. The songs recorded around the time of their second single is by far and away the best, but it's all pretty good. The track listing on the jacket and record appears to have nothing to do with the actual order of songs, which is annoying, but it's still worth tracking this one down. (TB)
(www.punkrecords.com)

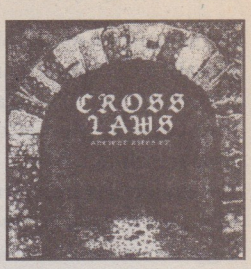
DESTRUCT / MAD PIGS – split CD
DESTRUCT, from Los Angeles, delivers six tracks of fast-tempo, boisterous, cut-the-shit-start-the-pit, straightforward punk. It's not quite hardcore but it's too filtered through the fast upbeat of modern punk to draw itself as a direct UK '77 or '82 style punk either. It's the kind of modern, relentless high-tempo, drum-driven, sing-a-long, that's just shy of pop-punk but still sheened in that style of professionalism, with the trapping of a club sound. DEFIANCE perhaps? Solid with interesting lyrics. On their half, MAD PIGS from Czech Republic drop seven tracks that are more lo-fi and their apparent 1-2, 1-2 simplicity reminds me of Japan's ORDER. Their shout-a-long pogo readiness has the careening melodic attack of good Eastern European hardcore. While the recording values don't match DESTRUCT's, there are great similarities between the upbeat drum attack and the energy that it makes for a balanced, cool and spiky split. (KS)
(PH, c/o Pavel, Mrstikova 393, 664 82 Ricany u Brna, CZECH REPUBLIC)

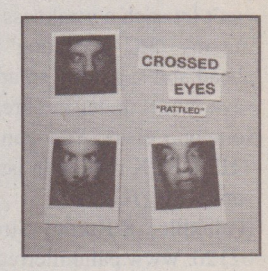
THE DEVILDOLLS ROCK 'N' ROLL STREET GANG – "I'm So Bored With the USA/Radio London"
This awkwardly named band of Ohio Anglophiles was around in the early 2000s and released a full-length before splitting up when their frontman passed away. Now, four years on, they've reformed with a few new faces. The A-side is, of course, a CLASH song; attempting to cover such a classic band is a highly risky proposition, but the 'DOLLS turn in a pretty respectable version, probably 'cause they stick pretty close to the original and the singer's got a good voice. Their original on side B is pretty decent as well—probably written with '77 punk in mind but coming off more like ANTI-FLAG or some other recent band due to the production. I can't say really anything good about the packaging though, except maybe it's so ugly that it might inspire someone to never use the computer to do layout ever again. (CS)
(Not On Your Radio, 4 St. Josephs Court, 99a Elm Grove, Southsea, PO5 1LH, UNITED KINGDOM, www.notonyourradio.com)

DICKIES – "Dawn Of The Dickies" CD
My favorite full-length (excluding the collection) from these LA pioneers of melodic punk circa 1977. This is a new digi-pak version, as *Dawn of the Dickies* was originally reissued on CD in 2000 by Captain Oi! The tracks are the same as the 2000 version, although this is re-mastered. I go into detail because this is a classic full-length, which every old school punk rocker should own. Packed with greats such as "I'm Stuck in a Pagoda With Tricia Toyota," "Manny, Moe, And Jack," and "Nights in White Satin," as well as two bonus tracks not on the original vinyl LP including the song "Gigantor." This is a no-brainer if you don't have it. (RL)
(Captain Oi!, www.captainoi.com)

DRIZZLE – "Punk Rock" CD
Tucson punk rock that sounds like well Tucson punk rock. For those of you don't know, Tucson has given us some awesome bands like KNOCKOUT PILLS, SHARK PANTS, and SWING DING AMIGOS. DRIZZLE would fit in perfectly with those bands, except that DRIZZLE has a little bit more of a classic SoCal Beach punk feel to them at times. Whoa, lo and behold this band also features a member of Bruce Roehr faves Sonoma's THE RANDUMBS. Good stuff. (JF)
(More Smart Than You, PO Box 42153, Tucson AZ 85733, www.drizzlepunkrock.com)

DRY-ROT – "Subordinate" EP
Everything about this record falls under the "cult" umbrella. I realize once you pin that label on something it's no longer valid but…eh, oh well! First off, they already have a sort of in-the-know type of following. Second, this record is a "concept" record of sorts as all





of the songs and samples relate to a (true?) story of a California man who kept mind-controlled human slaves around his home—at least one was painted, chained, and kept in a deep trench in his back yard. Also, the sound has similarities to recent hardcore bands a la SEX VID. Finally, they're Christian! The biggest cult there is. Ick. I feel the music and execution of this EP is awesome, and I believe Painkiller puts out a quality product, but I just can't let such a weakness go by without shaking my "PC watchdog" finger (I'll just go ahead and say it my smart-ass self so you can save your under-the-breath disapproval for someone else). You can reference my HIT THE DECK review in issue #289 for my reasons why. (JU)
(Painkiller, 8 Burney Street #1, Boston, MA 02120. www.painkillerrecords.com)

EASY BROTHERS – "Call to Arms" CD EP

It's always refreshing to hear a ska band sing politics that extend beyond unity, getting along, and black and white unite and fight. The EASY BROTHERS are Canadian, which might help. Definitely more CLASH/RANCID than OPERATION IVY/CITIZEN FISH, but the EASY BROTHERS have a nice line in lead guitar, some fancy keyboards, and lyrical concerns a cut-above most. Plenty of rock with the dub, and I like it. (RK)
(Radio Clash, www.myspace.com/theeasybrothers)

EAT AVERY'S BONES / THE KOJI KONDO – split EP

The first few seconds of KOJI KONDO had me writing them off as a sub-par post LOCUST or maybe even CONVERGE—a mushed-up screamo revival situation. Though as their side of this split progresses it turns out they actually are a little more interesting than that. The guitar reminds me a little of Greg Ginn's, but way poppier somehow—something is Ginn-like in the sound of the guitar and use of notes. Ha! As a band I think they resemble a significantly less amazing WRANGLER BRUTES and it's kind of uncanny—more self-consciously artsy and less sarcastic/great. However, maybe they exist in a post-NO AGE hardcore scene somehow, if that makes sense to you. The backing vocals and non-aggressive feel of this makes me think of the scene that exists at the Smell in LA with bands like NO AGE and ABE VIGODA. Their band is named after a video game music composer. Hmmm… EAT AVERY'S BONES kind of reminded me of a horrible band called STELLASTARR that I had to listen to everyday during my brief stint in fashion retail, mostly due to the KROQ new wave-ish keyboards and late period ANTIOCH ARROW (or maybe more Sonny from the VSS styled) breathy vocals. Maybe there are more contemporary bands of that nature I could reference but I am not well versed in that genre of music after Gravity Records stopped releasing it… (LG)
(self-released, no address)

ECOLI – "Big Stupid Ape (Police Test)" EP

Well shit, it looks like I'm outta the loop, 'cause this band is from the Bay Area and this is my first time hearing 'em. And lemme tell you, this eight-song debut is fucking killer—totally wild, manic hardcore that leaves me picking my jaw off the floor before I flip the EP to play it again. For real, I've listened to about ten times now and am at a bit of a loss how to appropriately describe it. That's always the sign of a great record. The lyrics make about as much sense as the music—part claustrophobic rant, part stream-of-consciousness verbal vomit—and the artwork on the insert depicts what appears to be some sort of skunk ape sodomizing a klansman. Go figure. It would be a disservice and ultimately inaccurate to compare ECOLI to another band, and not at all because they don't sound like anything else, but because they deserve to stand on their own. Features members of SECOND OPINION and NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE, but blows those (good) bands away, as well as everything else that came in for review this month. (CS)
(Stress Domain, PO Box 53352, Valencia, CA 91385)

ENTRE REJAS / RUPSBAND – split EP

Awesome international split here between ENTRE REJAS from Brazil, and RUPSBAND from the Netherlands. ENTRE REJAS plays some old school thrash with moments of blazing grind. At times they reminded me of GRIDE. RUPSBAND is more classic sounding. They cover HERESY and ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENT, which gives you a pretty good idea of the territory this comes from! This record is dedicated to the Grassroots Project—an anti borders organization. Cool! (NM)
(Caixa Postal 5084, CEP 90041, Porto Alegre RS, BRAZIL)

EPITHANATIOS ROGXOS / POREIA STO PERITHORIO – "split" LP

I don't know much about the current Greek punk scene but both of these bands play crust-inspired political hardcore. EPITHANATIO ROGXOS is a Euro-crust extravaganza. They mix fast hardcore parts with slower, epic interludes a la the first TRAGEDY LP. POREIA STO PERITHORIO seems influenced by Greek bands of yesteryear like EX-HUMANS or ADIEXODO, especially the vocals and playful bass picking, but their sound is definitely filtered through a modern sieve. The dual vocals on their side compliment each other really well, which is a rare feat, in my opinion. There are clear metal overtones on both sides of this—China cymbals, modern guitar tone, etc., but the metallic feel is well balanced with melody. The lyrics are printed on a poster style sleeve and translated into English. The insert boasts, "do it yourself or don't do it all." The profits from this record go to a fund to support political prisoners. Another cool record from an obscure region within the punk scene. (CI)
(Self-Released, no address)

EVERYTHING FALLS APART – "Tension" EP

This Buffalo band's name may recall HÜSKER DÜ, but I hear more of a WASTED YOUTH sound in the growled vocals and non-stop hardcore guitars. This debut effort boasts a strong measure of intensity—while the tunes aren't the typical short shocks, a patient listener may be pleased to find varied tracks that profit from multiple listens. Solid. (SS)
(Art of the Underground, www.artoftheudergound.com)

FALL OF EFRAFA – "Elil" CD

I think I'm one of the few who's not sick of the ISIS/PELICAN/OROKU sound yet, and that's probably a good thing for FALL OF EFRAFA. With three 20+ minute tracks it took me a bit to get it, but damn, once I did I fell in love. FALL OF EFRAFA plays big, slow, melodic but heavy post-hardcore with vegan- and atheist-leaning lyrics, some samples, and multiple vocalists. "Dominion Theology" blew me away with the long simple breakdown, the sample, and then the repetitive pummeling. It does remind me a lot of mid-era ISIS and OROKU. This is the second in a trilogy. The first was *Owsla*. I know I'm supposed to review *this* CD but this label—Halo of Flies—has been on fire. How many great releases do they have—PROTESTANT, HALF GORILLA, ABADDON and now this? (MH)
(Halo of Flies, c/o Cory Von Bohlen, 430 E. Lloyd St, Milwaukee, WI 53212, haloofflies-rcds@hotmail.com)

FETUS EATERS / MAGGOT COLONY – split EP

FETUS EATERS starts off with their brand

of sickening, grimey, vomit-core (haha) that contains pretty hilarious *Barfly* interludes between songs. On the flipside, MAGGOT COLONY has a varied styled thrash/grind sound that runs along the same lines as SOILENT GREEN or EYEHATEGOD. I probably wouldn't listen to this on an everyday basis, but it's good to break it out to throw on the turntable while I'm digging out my copy of *Evil Dead* on VHS. (JH)
(Agromosh c/o Ben Viele, PO Box 444, Yucaipa, CA 92399, www.myspace.com/agromoshrex)

FLYING OVER – "Danger Boy" EP

I haven't even listened to this one yet and I can just tell I'm going to like it. (It's a good thing after what that fucker LAZLO did to me.) The cover has a sort of EPOXIES feel to it. Let's check it out. Wow. This is old school punk rock in a mid-tempo, catchy, but not wimpy style. The Frenchies know their history when it comes to punk rock. They know that punk is simple, straightforward, not meant to be complicated. All three tracks are quality, just like I knew they would be. (KK)
(Frantic City, www.myspace.com/adrenalinfix77)

FOR SCIENCE – "Tomorrow's Just Another Day' CD

The press release attached with *Tomorrow's Just Another Day* describes a "frantic sound" with "spastic nervous energy" and talks of "screams and cuts." In actuality, this is white-bread modern day pop music—the kind that's playing in SUVs driven by the children of soccer moms. *Tomorrow's Just Another Day* does not contain a note of music that is frantic, spastic, or the least bit interesting. For some reason, FOR SCIENCE name-drops POISON IDEA in the thanks list, so I guess they are aware of "frantic" music. According to the press release, they have a marketing firm backing them up and a media license with MTV, VH1. ESPN, and the Fuel Network. Wow, way to go boys. I'm sure you have a long life ahead of you playing Clear Channel-sponsored sock hops. (CI)
(Insubordination, PO Box 2846, Columbia, MO 21045, www.insubordinationrecords.com)

FY FAN – "Levande Lik" EP

Yeah!!!! FY FAN fucking kicks the shit out of all I've heard this month. Raging, incendiary hardcore with tons of energy. This band hails from Sweden and is relentless from needle drop to the very last note. Great look to this release as well, a typical trait of Feral Ward Records. Buy this shit before it sells out, and go completely ballistic. PUNK!!!!!!! (MS)
(Feral Ward, www.feralward.com)

GUIDED CRADLE "We Will Not Survive" CD

GUIDED CRADLE's last LP was a major favorite of mine, and I was thrilled to see this in my review bin! These Czech bastards play some fucking gruff metallic (in a BOLT THROWER kind of way) crust punk. Pummeling without being monotonous, they throw together the best of the D-beat and AXE-beat schools. Hail! (NM)
(Insane Society, PO Box 18, 501 01 Novy Bydzov, CZECH REPUBLIC)

THE HANGOUTS / SOMETHING FIERCE – split EP

Two average pop punk bands. The singer for SOMETHING FIERCE sounds like he is doing a FEARGAL SHARKEY impersonation. Their first song, "Teenage Ruins," is pretty catchy, despite the fact that combined with the vocal style the song title seems awfully close to that of a very famous UNDERTONES song. The singer of THE HANGOUTS is doing her best to sound bratty, but her heart just isn't in it. Plus, how tough can you sound when you are singing about pirates? (CK)
(Manic Attack!!!, 1707 Austin Avenue, College Station, TX 77845)

HARRINGTON SAINTS – "Working Class Friday Night" EP

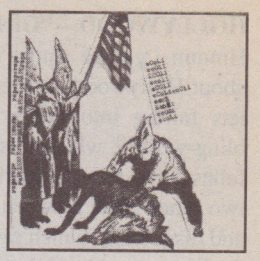
Just because I'm going bald and am from England does not necessarily mean I like all "cheeky going down the boozer with me mates" working class street punk. Luckily for THE HARRINGTON SAINTS, this is really good; way more mid '90s West Coast street punk (WORKIN STIFFS, SHIFTERS, ONE MAN ARMY) than plodding Oi! I mean, these fellas definitely have the first DROPKICK MURPHYS LP and the odd COCK SPARRER record, but that's a good thing I think. I could have done without the live BLITZ cover, but otherwise this is a really good record. (TB)
(Pirates Press, www.piratespressrecords.com)

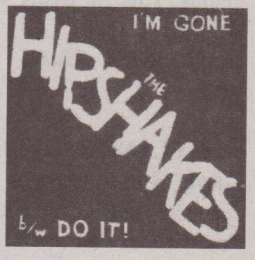
HELVETE – "Black Cat" CD

Ten tracks of well played, seamless modern metallic hardcore, expertly recorded, with brutal, scathing, vomited-out vocals. Poetic, reflective lyrics dealing with anger and confusion, but it's constructed so perfectly within the confines of this style, it's nearly indistinguishable from the bands in the US, Australia, Brazil, or anywhere else in the world that walk in the path of post-REFUSED style hardcore. This Swedish band is by no means offensive listening and engaging enough taken at face value, but doesn't peak out of the pack enough to define its own identity and grab interest. (KS)
(Dead Vibrations, Transportgatan 2, Box 17, 577 21 Hultstred, SWEDEN, www.deadvibrations.com)

THE HIPSHAKES – "I'm Gone" EP

The best goddamn record I heard all month. A band breaking out of jail and recording two songs later that evening wouldn't sound happier. I don't know if it's the tin-can guitar or the "I'm not pregnant!" jubilance of the dude singing, but fuck me if I can't stop playing it. It's like *Annie* with a bunch of unwashed little Brits recast as the orphans. "Do It" is so good, it could have come from Sacramento. Remember how happy you were the first time you heard "Strong Come On" by THE OBLIVIANS? Yep. Listen to it and jump out the window, because your life is downhill from here. (JP)
(Die Slaughterhaus, PO Box 160168, Atlanta, GA 30316, www.dieslaughterhausrecords.com)





HOLLYWOOD – "Girl?" EP

Hmmm…garage sludge? Nothing glamorous about Hollywood, unless you find aging starlets falling into pools of their own vomit bling-worthy, which is something I bet these fellas have some experience with. The first two tunes trade between semi-capable garage and disgusting raunch rawk. The title cut is by far the strongest of the three, though a complete ape of every trick in THE BLACK LIPS' book. I'd be interested to hear their next offering. (MC)

(Big Neck, PO Box 8144, Reston, VA 20195, www.bigneckrecords.com)

HOMOSTUPIDS – "The Edge" EP

HOMOSTUPIDS is easily one of my favorite bands right now. There are so few things currently that I am into enough to actually send off for records, and I already sent off for this shit, before I knew I had it for review, because this is one of those few things. Seriously though, this is as good as the first EP! HOMOSTUPIDS features Steve of 9 SHOCKS TERROR, but what's more important is that this record fucking rules and if you are not a chump you should try and get one before supplies run dry, because this is one of those dumb, limited-to-30 editions, each of which is on a different color. It's actually harder to talk about why things rule sometimes—to explain the feeling a record gives you when it gives you something other than boredom or distaste. This is rad as shit, trashed, gassed in the garage music. It's fucked up in a way that makes it more compelling than the 500 other dull pseudo-trashed garage combos attempting this chemical reaction right now across the US and the EU. I mean it's not "garage" music per se. Maybe similar to the way THE URINALS are juvenile and brilliant at the same time. Dumb genius. This EP easily will make my top ten this year. (LG)

(Radio 81/P. Trash, www.radio81records.com)

HUE BLANC'S JOYLESS ONES – "Arriere Garde" LP

I love the CHEATER SLICKS. It's a fact. In a perfect world I will love any band that also loves the CHEATER SLICKS. Isn't that the way it works? Well, HUE BLANC'S JOYLESS ONES have that CHEATER SLICKS style—cool guitar interplay accented by pounding drums. The rhythm is just too damn cool. Yet, the vocals are very different. One of the singers sounds like a goth CALVIN JOHNSON, and the other just speaks the lyrics in a monotone, once in a while raising the pitch. Overall, it's a very nice sound. (CK)

(S-S, 1114-21st Street, Sacramento, CA 95814)

INADAPTADOSS – "Los Blancos" EP

Driving punk from Argentina. These songs have a nice, thick sound, although I am not too into the dual vocals—especially when one singer is way too high up there on the screech meter for my liking. The music on this EP is strong enough though, and holds this all together. (MS)

(coneowen@hotmail.com)

IN DISGUST / SIDETRACKED – split EP

IN DISGUST plays hateful and fast as all hell with throat-gargle-like vocals. Four tracks from this San Jose band—no lyric sheet, but whatever they are spewing, you just know it's fucking mean. SIDETRACKED has nine tracks that are over before you know it. Coming at you fast and furious like INFEST or CEREMONY in both delivery and lyric style. All together a very solid release which sparks my interest in hearing future outings from both bands. (JH)

(Unholy Thrash, PO Box 675, Santa Cruz, CA 95061, ratzyouth@hotmail.com)

INEPSY – "No Speed Limit for Destruction" LP

From the opening riff, which could have fallen straight off THIN LIZZY's *Bad Reputation* album, it is quite apparent that these French-Canadian boozehounds have dropped whatever hardcore sensibility they once had. It's still got that INEPSY charm for sure, but they've amended the MÖTÖRHEAD-cum-DISCHARGE sound of their earlier records with a health dose of early MOTLEY CRÜE. It's the sound of drunken dudes clad in leather stumbling around/dancing and spilling beer all over you. It's pure, raucous, rollicking, unadulterated rock 'n' roll. And I'm pretty sure it's exactly what they were going for. This isn't really a punk record, but since my first listen, this has started to grow on me like a fungus. Not totally sold on it yet but... (JU)

(Feral Ward, www.feralward.com)

INFIERNO DE COBARDES – "Ciudad Monstruosa" EP

Simplicity exemplified to the fullest—INFIERNO DE COBARDES is made up of one man. His name is Teodoro and he is *obsessed* with DISCHARGE. The songs have the banana drumbeat that you either love or hate, and the vocals spew forth in the expected repetitious form—this could be called a tribute. Musically, most of the songs come straight from the DISCHARGE blueprint. However, there are a few catches that make this one of my favorites of the tired genre. The vocals are in Spanish and everything sounds punker when sung in Spanish, right? The music is played in a trashed out, rudimentary style, which gives *Ciudad Monstruosa* a lot of charm. Sometimes the bass is playing the wrong notes, the drums aren't always in time, and through all the clatter I hear an underlying creativeness. The guitars solos are brilliant, primitive, two-note squeals, and I really like the random tom hit at the end of "Ansiedad." I like my punk simple, and without fancy playing, production, and presentation, consequently *Ciudad Monstruosa* pleases all of my aesthetic sensibilities. (CI)

(Teodoro Hernández, Apdo 33.343, 08080 Barcelona, SPAIN)

INNER CONFLICT – "Shiffbuch Im Rahmen Programm" CD

These female-fronted German melodic hardcore punkers sing in their native tongue—which is to be encouraged, but it means that us non-Deutsch speakers have little-to-no idea what they're tackling lyrically. The digi-packaging is pretty deluxe, and in a green, nautical theme. Musically, they are pushing the edge of melodic, driving hardcore. BAMBIX springs to mind. INNER CONFLICT utilizes lots of power, melody, and slightly more than the verse/chorus song structure without losing any of the drive and direction. *Sehr gut*, as I believe the Germans would say. (RK)

(Twisted Chords, www.twisted-chords.de)

INSECT WARFARE – "World Extermination" CD

I have been waiting for this record ever since I got the *Evolved Into Obliteration* demo this past summer. Words cannot justify the sheer brutality *World Extermination* inflicts. It totally decimates pretty much all their previously recorded history, and that shit was damn awesome! Sounds like getting your ass beat with a shovel, then forced to pick up your own teeth and clean the floor because your blood and other bodily fluids soiled it. The vinyl version is limited to 200 copies on clear vinyl with a poster and will be sold out by the time you read this. (JH)

(625, www.625thrash.com)

INVASION – LP

INVASION plays hardcore in a dirty and aggressive style. This recording has a nice sprinkling of noise, and the vocals are heavy on the delay, which lends a Japanese feel to these Spaniards. INVASION is not quite as balls-out as some of the current Japanese

bands and instead has a weird quality similar to the early Japanese hardcore scene. The off-kilter factor keeps these songs interesting and memorable. These guys also display an ability to play in a variety of tempos. The mid-tempo track, "Claustrofobia" is an immediate favorite, and the speedy "Ahora" has a really cool guitar lead. All of the speed on side one is tempered with a freakishly slow, stomping opus called "Tiempo" that occupies all of side two. On two occasions, I've witnessed different people fall asleep to this song, but personally I love it. It has a long noise/delay break in the middle and comes back stronger than ever with the vocalist spewing on. INVASION is further proof that the Barcelona punk scene is rife with exceptional punk these days. (CI)
(La Vida Es Un Mus, www.lavidaesunmus.com)

THE JAILBIRDS – "Going to Stab the Killer Gang!!" LP

Alright! Repent Records returns from the dead to unleash another fantastic obscure Japanese band's LP on an unsuspecting yet extremely desperate rock scene. Super catchy garage punk tunes with a tinge of THE DAMNED thrown in for good measure. Screeching, rollicking, and just damn fun. Hurray! (CK)
(Repent, www.rudosandrubes.com)

KAPUT KRAUTS / NEIN NEIN NEIN – split CD

This is a German punk split and the bands sing in their native language. NEIN NEIN NEIN does a choppy, almost math-rock thing with emo yet rocking overtones—sort of SAMIAM with screaming vocals. KAPUT KRAUTS is similar but more up-tempo and melodic—maybe reminiscent of the '90s band STARMARKET? (RL)
(Twisted Chords, www.twisted-chords.de)

KILLING CALIFORNIA – "Goin' South" CD

Absolutely nothing wrong with this, I suppose—the lyrics aren't moronically offensive, the musicianship is competent, the production quality's high—but it's deadly boring D-grade MOTÖRHEAD-influenced (punk) rock, probably doomed to the eternal bar/club-circuit purgatory. You might like this if you've already given up listening to music that's interesting. Sorry dudes. (CS)
(Basement, PO Box 511, La Habra, CA 90633, www.basementrecords.com)

LAZLO LEE & THE MOTHERLESS CHIDREN – "Hey Doctor" EP

Jezus fucking Christ, it is not that difficult: Small record, big hole, 45 rpm. Big record, small hole, 33rpm. It should be lesson number one for those that get involved with music. And what the fuck is this? It sounds like LED ZEPPLIN meets HENDRIX meets THE WHITE STRIPES. We're on song number two and I'm on the verge of sleep. A strange sense of obligation makes me think I'll listen to the B-side, but I'm not happy about it. There's an OK garage rocker on the B-side, but it doesn't make up for what they put me through on the A-side. (KK)
(Raped By Records, www.myspace.com/rapedbyrecords)

LURKERS – "Fulham Fallout" CD

There was blasphemy committed the other day at *MRR* headquarters when I overheard someone say they weren't really into this band. This slur is almost an unpardonable offense! The first LURKERS album is an outright *mandatory* classic from the legendary first wave of British punk of 1977 and '78. *Fulham Fallout* may be in the top five, or at least the top ten, of the best LPs representing that era. I mean, c'mon, with classics like "Shadow," "Jenny," or "Self Destruct," how can you not love this? Some people say they ripped off THE RAMONES too much, but so fucking what! Every catchy track here is punk rock 'n' roll at its finest. And as much as I can't stand CDs, this digipak sleeve reissue from Captain Oi!, which comes with a booklet of liner notes and lyrics, is a keeper. I'm holding on to this even though I already have a vinyl copy 'cause mine is beat to hell, and it doesn't have the twelve bonus tracks that are included here. If you don't already own this, or you're looking for a CD copy, then this is the version to pick up. (BG)
(Captain Oi!, www.captainoi.com)

OS MANTIKOS – "Keep Fighting" EP

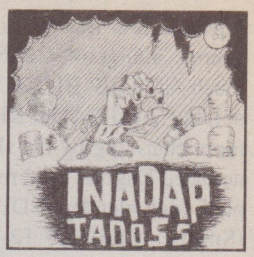
Don't let the Portuguese name fool you, these D-beat thrashers are from Selangor, Malaysia!! Released on an American label, OS MANTIKOS certainly blew me away with their ability to blend straight-up thrash with melodic, metallic hardcore a la FROM ASHES RISE. Definitely one of the cooler records this year. Comes with patch and sticker. (NM)
(Bacon Town, PO Box 1063, Tallevast, FL 34270)

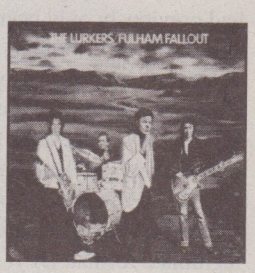
MANVILLE – "Getting Freak Nasty" EP

So here's the setting—after school I drove into Boston so I could go to Below Zero and finally pick up my own copy of *The Nutty Anti-Christ* that I heard at Sandy's house last weekend, and I had just gotten back to my Mom and Pop's house. I've pulled the record out, placed it on my borrowed turntable, dropped the needle in the grooves, when all of a sudden, I fall into a worm-hole underneath a pile of my dad's old porn that I stole and was hiding throughout the waist-high rubble that was my teenage bedroom. Instantly it's 2007 and I appear in the review room at the Maxi-pad, listening to the same song, when in actuality it's side one of this MANVILLE EP. Also the intro riff is a stone-cold rip of HIS HERO IS GONE's "Carry On." To be fair, the B-side is a bit less of a throwback to the "classic" '90s 'cause it adds some early-2000s-style AT THE DRIVE-IN sing-y back-ups followed by some crew choruses. File under em(br)o-violence. (JU)
(Yosada, PO Box 15404, Boise, ID 83715)

THE MISCASTS – "Days of Losing Tickets" EP

With a song title named "Going Underground" it ain't hard to wager a guess on the musical content of this





Japanese four-tracker. Some JAM worship of course, a hint of GAINT HAYSTACKS, a touch of THE BUZZCOCKS, and a large helping of LEATHERFACE made all the more charming by the sloppy but lovely pronounced English Mod revival put through the punk rock blender. (SD)
(Snuffy Smiles, 12-A Kamikousaicho, Shichiku, Kita-ku, Kyoto 603-8117, JAPAN)

THE MOB – "May Inspire Revolutionary Acts" CD

I suppose everybody's got his or her own, but my personal favorite band by far to emerge from the early '80s UK peace punk scene was THE MOB. If you haven't already, I would say it is mandatory that you check out their excellent discography on either Rugger Bugger Discs or Broken Rekids. If you dig that shit like I do, then think about picking up this new CD on Overground. It's a 72-minute collection of rarities *not* included on the aforementioned discography—namely the band's 1981 *Ching* tape, a pair of unreleased studio versions (of already-released songs), some early comp tracks, and some live stuff from '83. Granted, the sound quality and production is not perfect, many of the songs were re-recorded for their records, and there are some repeats over the course of the disc, but when the material's this good, you won't hear any complaints from me. This CD also comes with an interesting essay on the band as well as some cool photos (!) and artwork. Great job. (CS)
(Overground, PO Box 1NW, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, NE99 1NW, UNITED KINGDOM, www.overgroundrecords.co.uk)

NEW MEXICAN DISASTER SQUAD – "Peace For Nothing" EP

Finally a vinyl version of these songs that had previously only been available in the digital download format. Well for those who don't use computers as your main way of listening to music, let me just say that NEW MEXICAN DISASTER SQUAD delivers five rocking tracks of melodic hardcore a la LIFETIME/GORILLA BISCUITS and DAG NASTY. A good release, now available in a legitimate format. (JF)
(Kiss Of Death, PO Box 75550, Tampa, FL 33675)

NICE BOYS – "Very Mary" EP

So the kids went out and bought themselves a HELLO record. Yeah, the songs are great, but there's that VIBRATORS/STANGLERS/BRIEFS vibe of, "Hey guys, let's try *this* image *this* week!" I guess intention shouldn't matter—I mean, they're musicians, not pre-school teachers. Other current bands doing this bubblegum thing like THE RANTOULS and THE MAKE-OUT PARTY just seem a lot more original and honest about it. The "trippy" carousel music outros (a.k.a. wannabe SMALL FACES' *Ogden's Nut Gone Flake*) are kind of irritating, too. Aw fuck it! Why am I trying to be diplomatic? Look at the posing on the front cover…yeeeesh! (JP)
(Green Noise, 2615 SE Clinton St., Portland OR 97202, www.greenoiserecords.com)

NO SHAME – "White Of Hope Turning Black" LP

Melodic punk with political lyrics that sounds a lot like STRIKE ANYWHERE and HOT WATER MUSIC. The production is neat and clear and contains well thought-out lyrics about some current political issues. In "Armageddon Now!" they address the issue of global warming and how officials downplay the concerns. If you're into Fat Wreck Chords punk, check this one out. (PL)
(Fullsteam, www.fullsteamrecords.com)

OH SHIT THEY'RE GOING TO KILL US – LP

Thrash and crossover, leaning towards the metal side of things including twin lead guitar playing and solos. Lots of DRI worship, and I even saw a video of the band where they were all wearing DRI shirts while doing a DRI cover. On other tracks there is a NWOBHM influence, and it reminds me a lot of METALLICA demo tracks. They set themselves apart from a lot of the other thrash bands these days with twin lead guitar parts that remind me a lot more of IRON MAIDEN than thrash, which is a compliment. When I first heard thrash back in the '80s, the first thing that grabbed me was the comedy and silliness. I loved the mix of political/social lyrics spewed along with the jokes, fun, and six-packs. These guys carry on that tradition. "Some people don't believe vivisection to be a disturbing behavior / What if those needles were prod into the skin of your savior?" Skateboards, werewolves, drugs, and thrash!!!! (MH)
(Dear Skull, dearskull@gmail.com)

ONE LAST SHOT – "From Riches to Rags" CD

Wow! Where to start? Tough hardcore with gruff vocals that reminds me of the dude from THE MEATMEN, but the music is some sort of medium paced hard rock. OK, I'm procrastinating getting to the point. I'm not into this at all. A more early-rock BIOHAZARD? (MH)
(Sing Song, 114 Hicks St, Brooklyn, NY 11201)

PINK RAZORS – "First Degree" EP

Great two-fingers-in-the-air, beer can winged aimlessly in to the pit, sweaty basement, anthemic punk rock. Imagine if you will, a band taking the greatness of RADON, the simplicity of THE MISFITS, with the rocked out drive of THE RIVERBOAT GAMBLERS. Now stop imagining and go spend your hard earned spare change on this little three-track winner. (SD)
(Rorschach, PO BOX 14712, Richmond, VA 23221, www.rorschachrecords.net)

POBEL & GESOCKS – "Live" 2xCD

If you're a fan of POBEL & GESOCKS, the long-running anti-fascist German Oi! band, then there's a fairly good chance you'll be interested in this collection of live recordings from 2002 and 2003. It's really long. Me? While this may have its moments here and there, I'll be stickin' with COCK SPARRER, thank you very much. (CS)
(Scumfuck, Postfach 100709, 46527 Dinslaken, GERMANY, www.scumfuck.de)

THE PRICEDUIFKES – "Punkrock Afterparty" EP

THE PRICEDUIFKES play *eight* sped up pop punk tunes on *Punkrock Afterparty*. These boys like SCREECHING WEASEL, although they spent too much time trying to procure their leather jackets and neglected to write any clever songs. THE PRICEDUIFKES song title "I Wanna Be Retarded" succinctly sums up this record and saves me the trouble. (CI)
(Squinty Joe, www.myspace.com/squintyjoerecords)

PRIZE COUNTRY – "The Lottery Of Recognition" CD

This sounds like some hardcore kids decided to start a rock 'n' roll band. What they've ended up with is an amalgam of lurching riffs and overly-complex song structures that sounds like post-FUGAZI ex-straight-edge Revelation stuff, like QUICKSAND or something. The vocals are the strong suit: earnest without sounding sappy. The whole thing definitely *rocks*, but the sound is far too controlled (and dare I say sexless) to be considered *rock 'n' roll*. There is a distinction. (AM)
(Exigent, c/o Colby Houghton, PO Box 24, Kaysville, UT 84037, www.exigentrecords.com)

PUSH PULL – "3" CD

Heavy, wired sludge rock that's equal parts muscle and mucus. The six long-ish tracks here are very reminiscent of JESUS LIZARD. Although not recorded at Electrical Audio, the

album does have a very Albini-esque quality (it was mastered by SHELLAC band mate and NPR employee Bob Weston though). Think dense, grinding bass and drum grooves interspersed with snaking guitar lines and topped with hoarse, desperate vocals. Very '90s in a way but maybe it's time for this stuff to start making a comeback. (AM)
(Joyful Noise, PO Box 20109, Indianapolis, IN 46220, www.joyfulnoiserecordings.com)

PYLON – "GYRATE" CD

Two great reissues to review in one month! First the killer Danish bootleg, and now one of the best American post-punk records ever! PYLON was from early-'80s Athens, GA, a fertile scene that also produced OH OK and, uh, THE B-52s. Their music is discordant and whole sounding all at once. It's dense, thick, choppy, and sharp like a dream combination of WIRE and GANG OF FOUR. I know those are obvious bands to reference for this genre/era but I can't think of any other comparison. Vanessa's vocals are kind of reminiscent of the girls from DELTA 5 in this one way—but hers are cooler and tougher, where the DELTA 5 vocals are kind of moany and thin in comparison. Her voice is not exactly sexy *or* dispassionate, if that makes sense. It's classic sounding, yet kind of hard to place. Anyway, you'll be into this if you like arty punk that's easy to listen to while also making for complicated listening. Music that will transport you, and make you realize the possibilities that exist in the context of punk. I mean, this is a band that played with GANG OF FOUR, MISSION OF BURMA, REM, B52s, and THE TALKING HEADS. C'mon now. (LG)
(DFA, www.dfarecords.com)

THE RANDUMBS – "It's About Time…Again" LP

Fuck yes, you fucks! THE RANDUMBS provide a slice of Sonoma pride riddled with rock 'n' roll bullet-holes! The snotty punk rock that THE RANDUMBS clobbered you with repeatedly still rings true! Ian, Johnny, Noah, and Saul filled the vital punk-rock void right between Mr. GG ALLIN's "Drink, Fight, Fuck" and Mr. Joe King's "I Don't Wanna Work"! This catchy, fast, and infuriating punk rock was fucking balls-to-the-wall in its era—now it's frigging classic punk rock! You probably took THE RANDUMBS for granted when you puked off the porch together, side-by-side, at the Valley of the Moon Saloon all those years ago. Now you must reconcile with the disturbing truth—these fucks rock like evil motherfuckers! With punk gems like "Disgruntled," "Hey Little Girl," "I Don't Care," "Methamphetaqueen," "Knockdown Dragout," "Hydro-Head," "Here We Go," "No Work!" and "USA" in their repertoire, these cretins have taken their undisputed place in the pantheon of talented punk knuckleheads. Buy this record or you will never be culturally enriched! (BR)
(More Smart Than You, PO Box 42153, Tucson, AZ 85733, info@moresmartthanyou.com, www.myspace.com/therandumbs)

RAXOLA – LP

Though slightly lesser-known than the early LPs by THE KIDS or IVY GREEN and their ilk, RAXOLA's debut LP is one of the high water marks for European punk rock. I've always sorta thought of it as a much smarter record than anything else in its peer group too, because it doesn't rely as much on the token simplicity or sneer found in so many Euro punks from the initial era. That said, it can still whip the fattest, loser-est *Bloodstains* and *Killed By Death* enthusiasts among you into a frenzy. Radio Heartbeat has made it available legitimately on vinyl for the first time since its initial release. You'd be wise to pick it up. (MC)
(Radio Heartbeat, www.radioheartbeat.net)

THE RED DONS – "Death to Idealism" LP

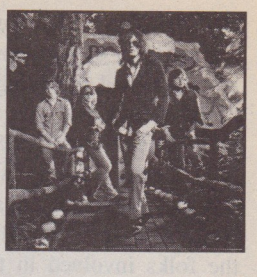
THE RED DONS are the new band headed up by Douglas Burns, who was previously the frontman and primary songwriter in THE OBSERVERS. If you liked the THE OBSERVERS you will probably like THE RED DONS, though I think this record lacks the punchiness of the former's work. I don't know if it's because Doug is trying to sing, but it doesn't seem to pack quite the power of THE OBSERVERS. Of course, I should be judging this band on its own merits and not comparing, but when you open up an LP with the first track being a song done by your previous band then what do you expect? Still, even with this record I plan to give Deranged some more declining US dollars. (JF)
(Deranged, 2700 Lower Road, Roberts Creek, BC VOH 2W4, CANADA, www.derangedrecords.com)

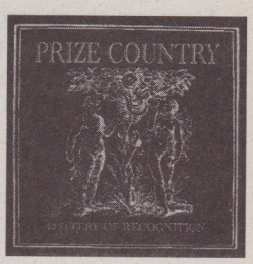
REVEREND BEAT-MAN – "Surreal Folk Blues Gospel Trash Vol. 1" CD

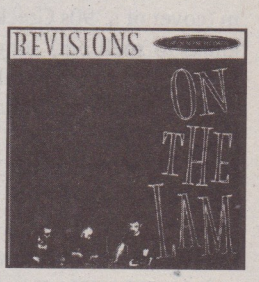
BEAT-MAN continues to show his sensitive and highly spiritual side with his latest collection of tunes. He takes Southern blues and gospel and mangles it the way only a Swiss cowboy could. Truly demented, but in the most amazing and fun sense. Are you ready to do the "Jesus Christ Twist"? I am. (CK)
(Voodoo Rhythm, voodoorhythm.com)

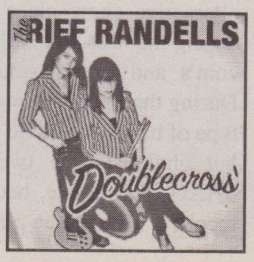
THE REVISIONS – "On the Lam" EP

Grandiose acoustic "punk" from ex-OBSERVERS frontman/songwriter Douglas Burns and two other folks—these songs are catchy and retain the dark quality of Doug's previous band. However, the MORRISSEY influence has taken full-form with THE REVISIONS. I'm sure there is an appropriate audience for this kind of music, but I can't help thinking that this band seems like an obvious step towards the mainstream. It's like if you stripped away all the aggression from THE OBSERVERS—this is what you'd have left. That might be the point with THE REVISIONS, but punk's aggressiveness is what makes it, ya know, "punk." Maybe I would like this more if it wasn't in the guise of punk, 'cos the songs aren't particularly bad. Still, its tameness leaves a bad taste in my mouth. (CI)
(Green Noise, 2615 SE Clinton St, Portland, OR 97202, www.greennoiserecords.com)









RECORDS

REVISIONS – "Revised Observations" LP

I'm all for experimentation. I'm all for taking risks (and recording an album of mainly acoustic covers of your former bands—in this case THE OBSERVERS and THE SPEDS—is definitely "taking a risk"). After all, if nobody experimented and took risks, great bands and music wouldn't exist, so I applaud the folks involved in this project for doin' what they're doin'. However, another thing I'm all for is calling a turd a turd. This record is a turd. (And don't think I say that 'cause I'm some punk rock purist who doesn't like mellow or acoustic music either—I can be a sucker for that shit, if it's halfway decent.) (CS)
(Dirtnap, 2615 SE Clinton Street, Portland, OR 97202, www.dirtnaprecs.com)

THE RIFF RANDELLS – " Double Cross" CD

Some straight-up early GO-GO'S mixed in with the rocked-out moments of the RUNAWAYS powered along with a healthy helping of GENERATION X. Eleven attitude-fuelled tunes played super catchy and super tight. (SD)
(Dirtnap, 2615 SE Clinton St.Portland, OR 97202)

SATAN'S REJECTS – "Antifascist" EP

SATAN'S REJECTS' approach is summed up by the cover, which displays a mohawked skull with guitars and beer steins stuck through it and surrounded by guns, money, and chainsaws. This is two-fingers-in-the-air P-U-N-K from Greece, with five solid tracks of catchy mohawked, meat and potatoes, uptempo punk rock. They lyrics are punker than punk with sing-alongs in English about being punk, drinking, and anti-government. This EP ends with a tough song against heroin (cover of a '90s Greek band my keyboard is amiss to spell out) sung in Greek that slides heavier into rough vocaled, gutteral harshness and 1-2 hardcore similar to cool proto-hardcore worldwide. (KS)
(Dimitris Gorgiou, PO Box 1456, 65110-Kavala, GREECE)

SHELLSHAG - "Destroy Me I'm Yours" LP

So SHELLSHAG is composed of two people who used to run a SF art collective and alternative show place called Star Cleaners during the '90s and early-2000s until the dot-com's and fire marshals pushed them out. During that time, you would never know what type of bands would be playing Star Cleaners, but obviously the two people in SHELLSHAG took notice, because stylistically this record is all over the place. Thing is like THE BIG BOYS, SHELLSHAG makes it work. I am not saying that SHELLSHAG sounds anything like THE BIG BOYS 'cause they don't, but like the aforementioned Texas band, SHELLSHAG combines their influences into one coherent sound. Think late '80s college rock, punk upped and drenched in a lovely syrup of feedback and you have SHELLSHAG. Top ten material, for sure! (JF)
(Starcleaner, 1020 Bushwick Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11221, www.starcleaner.com)

SKARPRETTER – "Ammunition" LP

Straightforward punk rock music from Europe with anarcho leanings. Totally anti-cop, anti-system, anti-Nazi message to mid-paced sing-a-long punk tunes. At some point the singer reminds me of Dee Dee Ramone doing "Warthog." *Ammunition* comes with a big fold-out sleeve with lots of art and lyrics. Pretty cool stuff—not so hot musically, but judging by their words this band may have a greater goal to accomplish than writing the best music. (MS)
(Skarpretter, www.skarpretter.com)

THE SKITZOS! – "Faster! Louder! Better!" EP

HMMM…I don't exactly know what to make of this. The music is speedy and melodic with snotty vocals a la SCREECHING WEASEL or maybe THE VINDICTIVES, but these songs have crew-style back ups and posi lyrics. At any rate, I get the impression that this Calgary quartet is out to have a good time. On the cover they're all laying in bed, looking at MÖTÖRHEAD's *Ace of Spades*, with comic books strewn about. THE SKITZOS! seem like the soundtrack to teenage life in rural suburbia, if that makes sense. (CI)
(Longshot, PMB #72, 302 Bedford Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11211, www.longshotmusic.com)

SLEEPING AT THE POPES – "Beaten Battered and Bruised" EP

Well, it's not every day that I get to hear a punk record from Africa! SLEEPING AT THE POPES existed in Cape Town, South Africa from 2004-2006. The music on this posthumous EP mixes the classic anarcho punk din with some aggressive modern influences. The lyrics touch on typical peace punk issues like animal rights and also themes that are relevant within South Africa such as state-sponsored, racism-inspired rape and abuse. The vocals bounce around between three suitably agitated vocalists—all with different pitches—sometimes they join together for a crucial chorus chant. SLEEPING AT THE POPES sound is powered forward by some dexterous bass playing, which makes this record stand out. This is a really cool document of the underexposed South African punk scene. (CI)
($4 ppd: Starving Times, PO Box 18884, Oakland, CA 94619)

SOAPBOX PARADOX – "Adventures in Misadventure" CD

SOAPBOX PARADOX plays a mix of OPERATION IVY and early ATARIS. GOLDFINGER? There is a little ska touch in this pop punk mix and decent enough songs on this full-length. A good melodic listen if not terribly original. (RL)
(soapboxparadox@rock.com)

SPECTRES – "Cold War" EP

Bleak, early '80s inspired post punk from Canada. Very dark in a JOY DIVISION way, yet very punk in a CRISIS or LACK OF KNOWLEDGE way. For recent comparisons you could look towards FRUSTRATION from France or even the darker side of NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS. Fans of the more gothic side of peace punk would be fools not to pick this up. (TB)
(Whisper in Darkness, PO Box 40113, Portland, OR 97240)

THE SPLINTS – CD

I've got to give it to these guys, I'm not the biggest fan of the '90s pop-rock with the slowdown-speedup parts and the warbly BAD BRAINS singing, but they're not obnoxious about it. It kills me that they sound like they're trying to fit a mold, but seem like if they said "fuck it" they could produce some good stuff. Quit giving a shit, kids—there's some promise there. (JP)
(Lightning Rock, 4738 Garnet Cir, Stow, OH 44224, www.lightningrockrecords.com)

STOMPER 98 – "Fur Die Ewigheit" CD

Ah, bless the Germans and their beer hall pub rock. In the same vein as personal faves THE STAGE BOTTLES, STOMPER 98 deliver up rousing street punk in German with what sounds like a thousand people on back-up vocals. You can almost hear the steins of lager clinking together. They add a sax here and there, which actually works against my better judgment, though I could do without the ska numbers. What I like about these lefty German skins is that they keep up the pace, having as much in common with SLIME as they do THE TEMPLARS. This is good shit. (TB)
(DSS, www.dssrecords.com)

SUBCITY DWELLERS – "When the Beat Starts to Pound" CD

I must be getting old! This is an album of

ska—no punk, just ska, and largely old style. Lots of dancehall and Hammond organ, a bit of laid-back dub, and bloody hell, I like it a lot. Having a kick-ass horn section and the aforementioned keys helps for sure. So does a strong songwriting sensibility. Also, they have decent lyrics covering a variety of issues, don't let MEM down either. If you're still hankering after THE SPECIALS, it'd be worth tracking this eight-piece ensemble down. (RK)
(Longshot, PMB #72, 302 Bedford Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11211, www.longshotmusic.com)

THE SUBHUMANS – "The Internal Riot" LP

Nearly a decade after their previous LP, this record was almost inevitable—THE SUBHUMANS have always had so much to say. The instrumental sound may lack some of the bite of their early material (not quite as urgent or compressed as their most notable vinyl), but the overall sound is more musically varied. Like your better anarcho-punk, this album is dense with ideas. Even a tune like "Mosquitoes" vents its curious ire—yes, about hating mosquitoes. Strangely, it turns out to be the LP's most energetic and memorable tune—where the outraged vocals seem to be truly desperate. (And its sentiments are timely—a mosquito has decided to run orbits around the computer as I type.) (SS)
(Bluurg, 116 Bush Hill, Bath BA2 2QS, ENGLAND)

SUBURBAN LOCKDOWN – "Laid to Waste" CD

This is a perfect example of why it's important to give a band a second chance sometimes. When I first listened to this CD I passed it off as a decent, maybe even above average hardcore band with interesting vocals that are obviously inspired by Roger Miret. I was prepared to write a mediocre review, but when I threw this on a few days later and read the lyrics while drinking my morning coffee, I started to realize that I liked *Laid to Waste* way more than on first impression! Although there is the aesthetic sentiment of blue collar street punk or skinhead subculture, the lyrics go far beyond typical songs of drinking or whatever and cover issues such as NSA spying, being economically disadvantaged, and how many dumb people we have in this country. The music on this is pretty tight and never slows down, but maybe the quality production takes away a little bit of the bite that would otherwise place this on my "A" list. Fans of LOWER CLASS BRATS and mid-period AGNOSTIC FRONT should take note. (BG)
(Durty Mick, 19106 S. Normandie Ave., Box 311, Torrance, CA 90502, www.durtymickrecords.com)

TELEVISION PERSONALITIES – "Mummy, You're Not Watching Me" LP

I'm sort of in the dark about this release—is it a bootleg, new material, old re-issue? A punch in the dick for the wassik that put this little project together. Anyways, whatever it is, I'm digging in. If ya ain't familiar with the TV PERSONALITIES, their music, which started in the late '70s, falls somewhere between power pop, mod revival, and psychedelic dub rock. Yeah I know, but trust yer ol' Uncle Dougdog, it works! A band that had a deep impact on a whole genre of duffle-coat wearing dweebs, THE PASTELS, THE WEATHER PROPHETS, and the Creation label all owe their existence to this band. (SD)
(bootleg, no address)

TERRIBLE TWOS – "A + A" EP

If "the day after" ever had a soundtrack, it's this record, which just screams, "Oh God, that was your *brother???*" and then steals your change jar. The singer would probably be insulted if his reviewer said he has a great voice, but he has a great voice. The fucking Midwest is putting California to shame—step it up, West Coast! Ex-PIRANHAS and CLONE DEFECTS, so don't expect any point-A to point-B, 1-4-5 nonsense. Real life at its finest. (JP)
(Big Neck, PO Pox 8144, Reston, VA 20195, www.bigneckrecords.com)

TERROR – "Rhythm Amongst the Chaos" CDEP

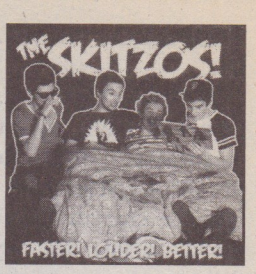
Los Angeles hardcore veterans, TERROR brings 4 new tracks and one obligatory BREAKDOWN cover (featuring Vinnie Paz from JEDI MIND TRICKS). Vogel's vicious screams and Nick Jett's pummeling drum playing are the highlights for me on this. However, it's Nick Jett's talent behind the mixing board that's most impressive. His studio, Blood Tracks, captures TERROR at their most visceral, bridging the gap perfectly between modern heavy metal and traditional hardcore. For this genre, no one does it better. (CC)
(Reaper, www.reaperhardcore.com)

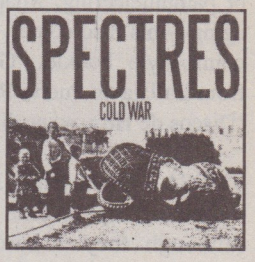
THRASHINGTON DC – "To Live and Die in B.M.O." LP

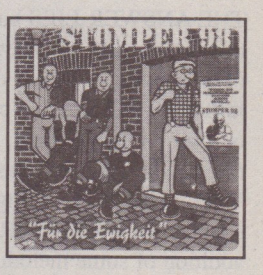
I'm torn between whether the name of this group is brainless or brilliant, but either way the music here is pretty goddamn good! The singer for this French thrashcore powerhouse has an amazing scream that needs a two-guitar wall of sound just to keep up with him. Although the lyrics never get too serious, there are some cool songs about living in a dead city, dumbasses in the scene, and one about how French people should look at the evil of their own leaders instead of solely focusing on the Bush administration. Most of the time the tunes here are hardcore sounds not unlike DEAD ONES or other good Y2K-core, but sometimes there's a more melodic element along the lines of KID DYNAMITE or something. That factor brings it down a notch for me, but I still really dig this. There are only 500 of these floating around out there, so act quick. (BG)
(La Fee Verte, 5 Rue du Petit Moulin, 29200, Brest, FRANCE)

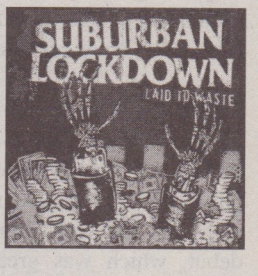
TOXPACK – "Cultus Interruptus" CD

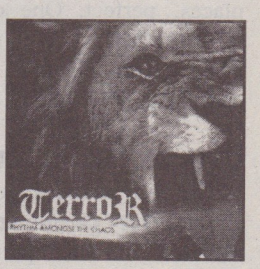
TOXPACK hails from East Berlin and has a modern street punk sound. This CD is all about big sounding production, melodic leads, gruff vocals, catchy hooks, and big guys grunting slogans in German. They even incorporate saxophone in one of their songs. If you're into street punk played by large hardcore dudes check this one out. (PL)
(DSS, www.dssrecords.com)











TROPIEZO – "El Manuel de La Perfecta" CD

TROPIEZO has been around for some time now and have put out several releases. Aggressive, full-throttle hardcore sung in Spanish. Good shit here, with really quick and intricate changes that enhance the overall sound on this disc. Lyrically, TROPIEZO delivers an interesting perspective on hot issues of today, without flattening everything or pamphleteering; what a relief. Nice packaging—this disc comes with a nicely printed comic-style booklet. Good fucking record from La Isla de Puerto Rico. (MS)
(Discos de Hoy, www.discosdehoy.com)

TULSA – "Sour Digs" LP

One of my favorite local bands to see (although they're hard to catch because they're always on tour). I have a bunch of garbled cassettes and of course the split with THE ANSWER LIES but if I'm not mistaken this is their first LP. Viewed in person they are often a sweaty mess of drunken choruses and falling-over drums, but captured here in glorious stereophonic vinyl, they harken back to the heady days of classic East Bay punk. Yeah, what I'm saying is that the record sounds like CRIMPSHRINE (maybe with the addition of some melodic REPLACEMENTS guitar). You get the idea. Raw, catchy-as-flu sing-a-long DIY punk. (AM)
(Starcleaner, 1020 Bushwick Ave, Brooklyn NY 11221, www.starcleaner.com)

TYVEK – "Needles Drop" 2x7"

Everyone, and I mean *everyone*, fucking loves this band. Easily one of the best new punk/DIY acts around right now, on record and live—this 2x7" completely shatters their debut, which was great in it's own right. Energetic as fuck, choppy in all the right places…perfect. One of the year's finest releases. (MC)
(What's Your Rupture?, 225 W.13th St, New York City, NY 10011)

UNHOLY GRAVE – "Revoltage" LP

The last record I got by this band was *Cryptic Dirty Conformity* and like their other releases, it was pretty much standard UNHOLY GRAVE fare. Not in a "this is boring rehash" kind of way. You just get what you have come to know and love about them with no surprises—that low-fi, distorted grind that these folks are masters of serving up, but with *Revoltage*, there is a noticeable difference. The first track puts you into a state of calm, which made me do a double take to see if I had the right record playing and then came the shitstorm. Sounding much louder with better production then previous efforts but still maintaining their signature sound. Capturing what they sound like live, which I think is far superior to anything they have put out on a recorded format. This ends similar to the way it began and is by far my favorite of their releases. Don't blow this off as another UNHOLY GRAVE record—the one you should have had all along. The vinyl version is limited to 500 copies and mine came on yellow vinyl with red and black splatters. (JH)
(Agromosh, c/o Ben Viele, P O Box 444, Yucaipa, CA 92399, www.myspace.com/agromoshrex)

UZI SUICIDE – "Comin' At Cha" EP

I adamantly refuse to use the term fastcore, 'cause in my humble opinion if it ain't fast, it ain't core. This Santa Cruz band came from the blast-beat-laden, pre-retro-invasion, hardcore thrash school of LACK OF INTEREST or SPAZZ. I'm done with the term powerviolence too. It makes it too easy to write a short cop-out review, which I tend to do with this style. I also say "came" because these were the final songs put to tape by UZI SUICIDE before their demise in 2005. This record tends to walk that fine line between sarcastic and goofy (mostly in the lyrics). Generally when the needle starts to point towards goofy I stop paying attention. Fortunately this record just barely stays in the game and I can definitely hang. (JU)
(Unholy Thrash, PO Box 675, Santa Cruz, CA 95061)

VAE VICTIS "A World in Flames" EP

Judging by the cover, this is a pretty damned crusty release, but there is more than that here. VAE VICTIS is from Australia and play some very cool, varied, melodic, metallic hardcore with moments of either anarcho-punk, crust, and even doomish influences. There is some cool guitar work, which lends a kind of metallic edge to it, and the female vocals are generally pretty harsh sounding. I am going to have to find more stuff by this band! Awesome. (NM)
(PO Box 430, Newtown, NSW 2042 AUSTRALIA)

VENA CAVA – s/t LP

San Diego's non-stop touring machine, VENA CAVA brings us the vinyl version of a CD that has been out for a little bit, and it hasn't lost any of its power in the superior format. April's vocals still soar and blend well with brother Corey and drummer Patrick in this gem of a melodic punk rock record. Yes people, VENA CAVA is a band that many overlook but shouldn't if they are fans of such groups as LEMURIA, DISCOUNT, and TILTWHEEL. So go out and get these twelve tracks of pure delight. (JF)
(Vena Cava, www.venacavamusic.com)

VIOLENT ARREST – "Fear" EP

This is VIOLENT ARREST from England's newest EP on Deranged Records. Fast driving hardcore that is more reminiscent of an early-'80s style than much of the hardcore that has come out lately. I'd put it up there with other current bands like 86 MENTALITY and PUNCH IN THE FACE. No frills, just in your face. They also do a FIX cover, which is good but nothing compares to the original. (PL)
(Deranged, 2700 Lower Road, Roberts Creek, BC VOH 2W4, CANADA, www.derangedrecords.com)

VIRUS – "Unacceptable Noise Levels" CD

I was wondering when VIRUS would get a full release done. Active Distribution made it happen! Thanks guys. VIRUS was an awesome anarcho punk band from the classic school of the UK in the early '80s. They recorded a couple of demos early on (the original group was around from 1983 to 1986), which appear here, and are great stuff, head and shoulders above most anarcho punk of this era, I have to say. ICONS OF FILTH, ANTI-SECT, etc. are fair comparisons. *Unacceptable Noise Levels* also includes some songs recently written since the band reformed a few years ago. Excellent! (NM)
(Active, BM Active, London, WC1N 3XX ENGLAND, www.activedistribution.org)

WHITE LUNG – "Local Garbage" EP

First off, this was literally one of the dirtiest records I've ever pulled out of a sleeve. I had to wipe so much dust and grime off the grooves you'd think it was some reject jukebox 45 that had been sitting in the bins at Amoeba for ten years. Luckily I'm only risking *MRR*'s needle and not my own. WHITE LUNG is the latest in the wave of riot-grrl post-MIKA MIKO bandwagon jumpers. Four young Vancouver art-student (?) ladies with a fondness for BIKINI KILL and WIRE in equal measure. The alchemy of their influences (or the "For Fans Of" list on their press release) should equal something so blisteringly unbelievably amazing that one might never want to risk listening to lesser music again. Though not quite living up to the self-generated hype of their record-label one sheet, WHITE LUNG has released a pretty great record of jagged, catchy punk. (AM)
(Hockey Dad, 4150 Brant St, Vancouver, BC V5N 5B4, CANADA)

V/A –"Bold Beginnings: An Incomplete Collection of Louisville Punk 1978-1983" CD

Cool retrospective on (you guessed it) the early Louisville punk scene. Ten obscuros featured here, with the only ones I recognized being MALIGNANT GROWTH (one of the best bands from the excellent *Master Tapes vol. 2* double-LP), THE ENDTABLES (from *Killed by Death #10*), and the BABYLON DANCE BAND. The fare is a solid but not mindblowing mix of '70s punk and artier shit, with the only HC stuff by the aforementioned MALIGNANT GROWTH (but man, do those tracks rip!). What bumps this into "recommended" territory is the nicely assembled booklet full of liner notes and cool photos. Now when's someone gonna reissue that great SQUIRREL BAIT demo? (CS)
(Noise Pollution, PO Box 72189, Louisville, KY 40272, www.louisvillenoise.com)

V/A – "Esperanza: Dutch Hardcore Punk Against the G8" CD

A long title, but this is a very cool release that benefits a grassroots, anti-border solidarity group. Most of these bands are new to me, but it definitely impressed me by the quality of current Dutch hardcore bands! MIHOEN, SEEIN' RED, NUESTROS DERECHOS, LAZYSTAR, THE TOMMIES, and many more. Cool. (NM)
(www.grasssrootsprojects.com)

V/A – "Pære Punk" LP

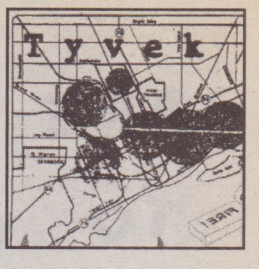
LOST KIDS, SODS, ELEKTROCHOCK, SLIM, KLICHE, BRATS, DREAM POLICE, and NO KNOX. It kind of looks like a boot because there's no info in regards to record labels or anything attached to it, so do your damnedest to get this because the most important thing I have learned since becoming a shitworker at *MRR* is that Danish punk *fucking rules*! To put it poetically and truthfully. I am just going to tell you that if you like fucked up music that is catchy and disturbing you need to get this bootleg! So far my favorite bands are NO KNOX for their total collapse of musical sense, it's more destroyed than fucking FLIPPER… LOST KIDS is known for their "hit" "Cola Freaks," which you should try listen to/download if you haven't already. They have this X feel to them; in that there are dueling male/female vocals, and they play really catchy punk, but with no X-styled rockabilly tinges at all. If you like GORILLA ANGREB at all you will be able to detect and dig the influence LOST KIDS had on them. KLICHE plays rad doomy keyboard punk that is really catchy and dark sounding. BRATS kind of reminded me of thuggish DEAD BOYS influenced punkers. SODS is also thuggish but way tougher, and better. Totally raw punk with almost hardcore touches in places, it's fucking raging, desperate music and a highlight on an already close to impeccable comp. ELEKTROCHOK is also incredible. Rad dispassionate girl vocals about consumer society doom, set to classic-sounding supercatchy punk that kind of reminds me of some mythical Cali punk band I can't quite place right now. SLIM plays super destroyed rock 'n' roll punk beatoffs. Dude, seriously every band on this is fucking rad as hell and you should send off for it from whichever distros carry boots, and when newly inspired, go form a band that doesn't sound like an endless Keith Morris circa '81 tape loop. (LG)
(bootleg, no address)

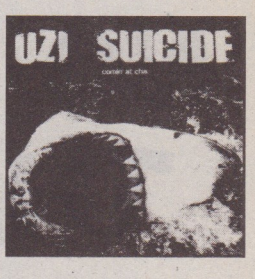
V/A – "Trapped In A Scene" CD

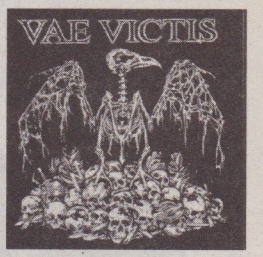
This comp features a lot of the heavy hitters of today's power violence/grind scene. 44 songs in 37 minutes! It's hard to decide the stand-outs 'cause every band on this here compilation is great—BRAINIAX, ENDLESS BLOCKADE, INSECT WARFARE, SEVERE, THREATENER, IN DISGUST, IRON LUNG, TUMORFEAST, KNUCKLESCRAPER, CALL THE COPS, WARZONE WOMYN, RUNNING FOR COVER, and the almighty HATRED SURGE who opens this beast up with the best tracks of the bunch. Blazing! (JU)
(625/Give Praise, www.625thrash.com, www.giveprais-erecords.com)

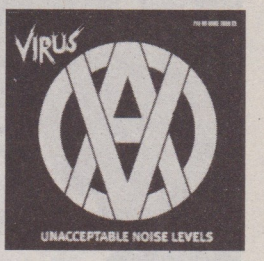
V/A – "Warning Vinyl Fanzine" EP

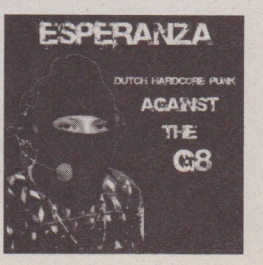
Four-song, big-hole 45 from *Warning* fanzine in a tri-panel fold out, featuring four bands from Portland. ROTTEN CADAVER has a caustic, thin, charging track that works in that raw "hey they're at the end of the hallway" sound with scathing vocals. DOG SOLDIER delivers a gruff-throated, scratchy version of EXPLOITED's "Fuck The U.S.A", which is solid, but probably more of a blast live than it is on record. DEADLY ULTRA SOUND sounds like an ADK/*Hold Up Omnibus* outtake—early proto-Japanese hardcore, with a cool off-kilter recording that highlights the slathering vocals and omnipresent tinny, noodling guitar solos. LEBENDEN TOTEN supplies their CONFUSE/VORKREIGSPHASE noise that's ram-charged with MELT BANANA-style clippy, shrieked female vocals. The back cover says "not for persons over the age of 30" which is funny, but effectively eliminates any of the people all these bands are emulating from ever hearing what they inspired, and probably more than half of the people who play on the record. Try releasing a MP3 download compilation off your MySpace page if you're really trying to reach the kids. (KS)
(Warning, no address)











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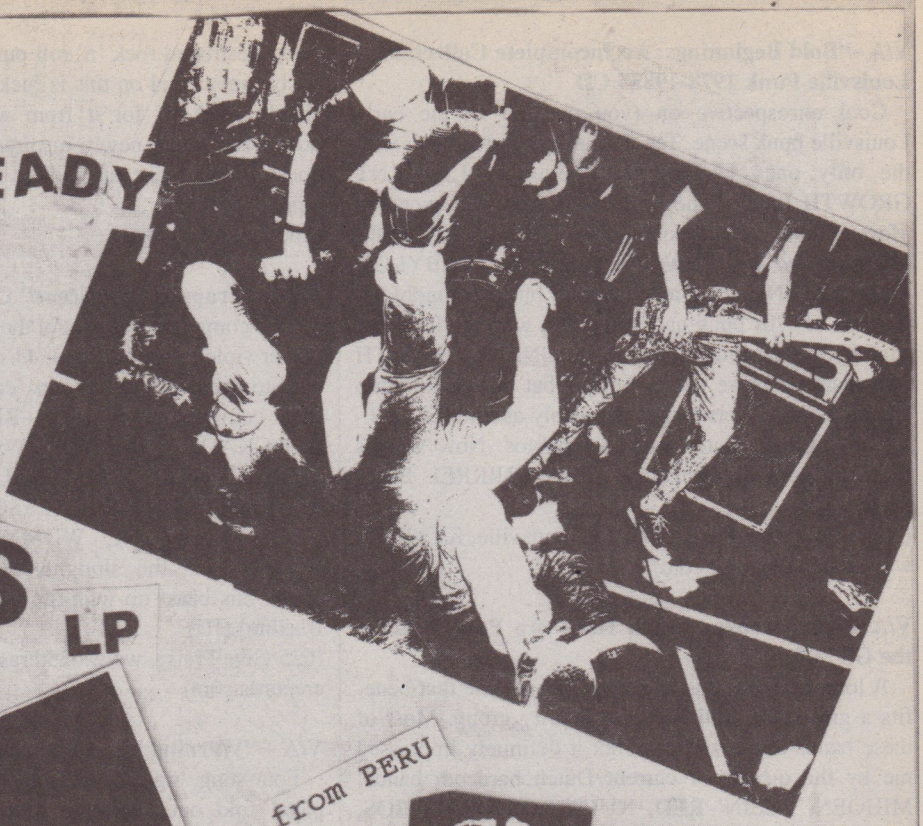
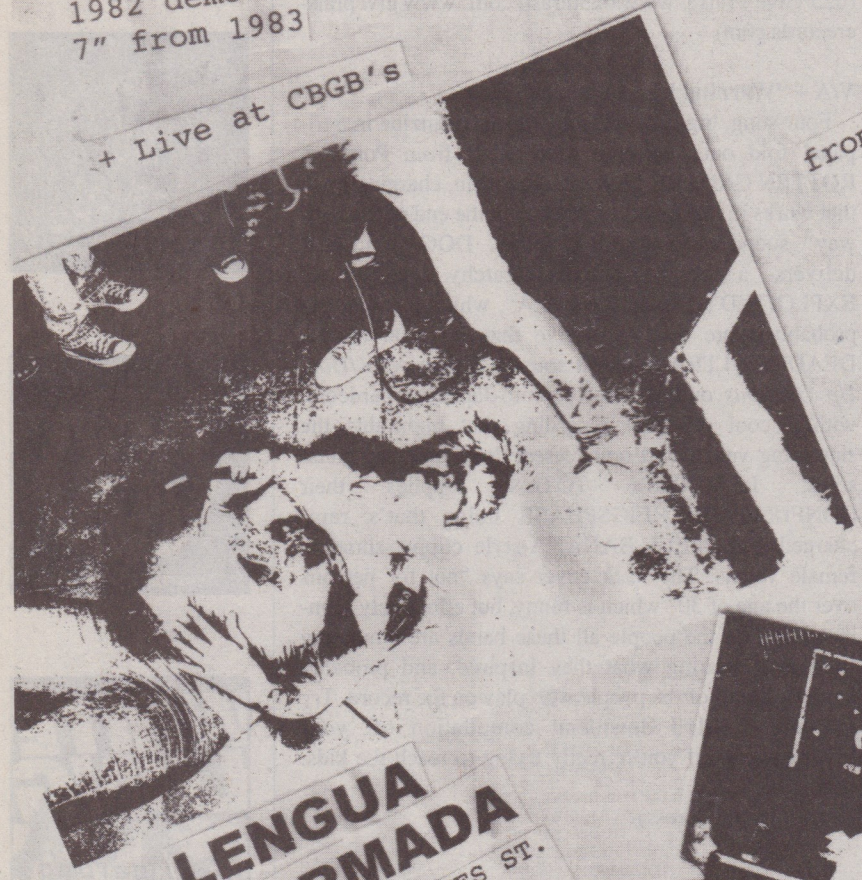


NO THANKS LP

1982 demo
7" from 1983

+ Live at CBGB's



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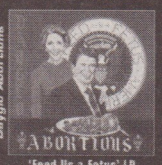


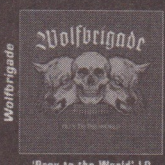
'Feed Us a Fetus' LP

'Here Today, Guano Tomorrow' LP

'Two Dogs Fucking' LP

'Death Race 2000' LP

'Holy Shilte' LP



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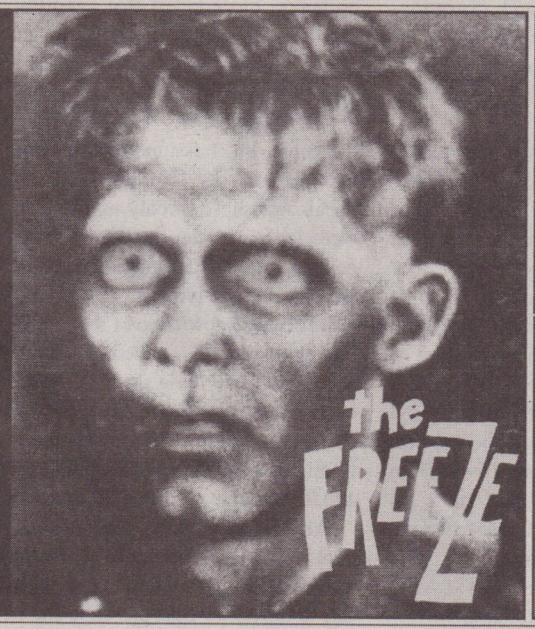

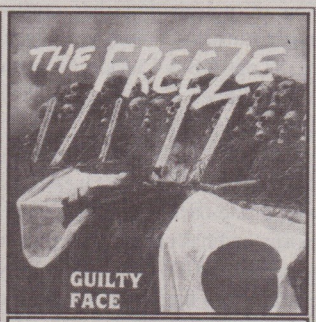

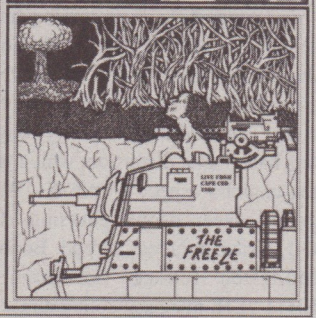

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DEMOS

Send demos and CD-Rs to: MRR attn: Demos, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please provide a postpaid price and a mailing address with your demo! Reviews by Peter Avery, Justin Briggs, Eric Butterworth, and Cissie Scurlock

THE CHALLENGER DEEP – This has some HOT SNAKES style down-stroke madness going on, which might be why they moved to San Diego (pure speculation though). The songs are up-tempo, semi-hardcore, rock songs that sound similar to a number of former John Reis bands but with maybe half the energy. (Pete) (5-song CD, no lyrics included. thechallengerdeep@gmail.com)

DARK AGES – This Missouri band plays good ol' American styled classic hardcore. It's not overtly tough, nor is it all that snotty, the songs are well played and well recorded, and it's over in a flash. This isn't very different from what countless other bands are doing in every corner of the world right now but it just brings to light that there's a reason this sound is "classic." Why fuck with a good thing. This demo is great! (Justin) (4-song CD, no lyrics included. myspace.com/darkageskc)

DAWN OF HUMANS – Nesting somewhere on that fairly short but often mistraveled, Bermuda Triangle-style vortex between crust, metal, and hardcore, this Brooklyn band offers up a pretty decent demo. The main riffs are fairly repetitive but there are enough leads and such going on to keep thing moving without too much stagnation. It's mostly heavy, mid-paced, and driving with the vocals channeled out in a horse scream. I bet this band is pretty sweet live but who knows…Cool. (Justin) (7 song cassette, lyrics included, $3 ppd. Eugene, 147 Rugby Road, Brooklyn, NY 11226, projectileppuke@yahoo.com)

DEATHTRIBE – With the inclusion of the D-font and a song called "Shitlickers" you already know what this sounds like. By no means original, Japan's DEATHTRIBE do the DISCHARGE-influenced crust thing serious justice and the recording quality really makes the bombasticism shine like the last light we're going to see when the madmen get sick of waiting to push that ever so tempting button. An awesome demo and I can't help but bang my head and raise a taut fist to the sky. (Justin) (6 song cassette, Japanese lyrics included. So Matsumoto, 15 Kinryo-So,3-37-9 Kouenji-Kita, Suginami-Ku, Tokyo, 166-0002, Japan, kaotik-hero@hotmail.co.jp)

DUCKMANDU – So this is one of those, one-man-band-solo-nutbar-accordion-punk demos that you have been hearing so much about. This demo includes accordion covers of DEAD KENNEDYS, MINUTEMEN, and BLACK FLAG. Imagine if WEIRD AL was a total punk to-the-max and never covered pop culture hit-jams and never discovered any other instruments besides the accordion...and wore a duck hat instead of elaborate costumes. (Eric) (21-song CD, no lyrics included,www.duckmandu.com)

EMERGENCY DAMAGE CONTROL – To these ears the reason that I find an attraction to bands like LEBENDEN TOTEN, CONFUSE, or DISORDER is because underneath the mess there is an extreme sense of melody and hooks and the noise just adds a nice sheen of mud to dirty it all up. EMERGENCY DAMAGE CONTROL, while "going for" that sound, has none of those qualities. It's just noise for noise' sake and there just don't seem to be any songs." The guitarist, vocalist, bassist, and drummer just appear to be playing whatever they want like a free-jazz version of noise-not-crasher crust-and distortion-music. (Justin) (12 song cassette, no lyrics included, $2 ppd US & Canada, $4 world. Capitalicide, 92Riel Street, Gatineau, Qc J8Y 5Y2, Canada. capitalicide@hotmail.com)

GAUNT – These Scots confused me because this starts off with a fast hardcore song, complete with group back ups. The second song is kind of moshy and has chugga guitars, and then the third song is a RUDIMENTARY PENI cover!? The circle A's on the insert, and their choice in cover songs suggest they are coming from the anarcho school versus my other impressions. The rest of the songs, aside from an ICONS OF FILTH cover, also fall more in line with the weird PENI style. The recording is pretty rough and the guitars have metal distortion, which takes away from the anarcho aspect a little bit. Well, I guess it's good to keep people guessing. (Cissie) (9-song CD, lyrics included. $3 ppd. Boaby Binbag, 10/7 Murieston Terrace, Edinburgh, SCOTLAND EH11 2LH. myspace.com/gauntscotland)

GUILTY FACES – By the name alone I was expecting some sort of beast from a similar genus as the FREEZE. What I got wasn't far off. GUILTY FACES just do a great job of mixing fast '82 styled riffs with super snotty vocals, melodic guitar leads, and loads of punchy hooks in the same way as you-know-who. Man, this is the third smoking demo in a row. It's a good month! (Justin) (6-song CD, lyrics included. 3 Clearview Ave, Bethel, CT 06801, tommyhperkins@aim.com)

HELLHAAK – While HELLHAAK is undoubtedly a punk band, this demo is all over the map stylistically. Some of the songs are gruff catchy punk and others are more grooving. I hear elements of surf, ska, and Eastern music influences, and one track on here is straight up funk. All of the songs sound very distinct from each another with the unifying element being melodic hardcore with gruff vocals. The lyrics are in German and are translated into English. (Cissie) (8-song CD, lyrics included. www.hellhaak.de)

I HATE THIS – I HATE THIS plays fast, thrashy songs with just a guitar, drums and vocals. Two of the five songs make it past the one-minute mark but the vocalist, with his high pitched screaming, manages to jam the words together to make a surprisingly long lyrics sheet. Musically, speedy drumming and bar chords dominate but there are a bunch of little hooks and up-tempo breakdowns that keep things interesting. (Pete) (5-song CD, lyrics included. $2 ppd. 105 Summit Ave., Shillington, PA 19607. wehatethis@ gmail.com)

LUNGLANCE – I don't know much about the genre, but I assume this is stoner-grind, and it's from the land of brie and baguettes. The vocals are super throaty as if a chunk of wood were lodged in the dude's voice box. It sounds painful, yet still the guitars groove on, none the wiser. All of the lyrics are in French, but with my rudimentary knowledge of the language I can tell you that one song is called "I Am the Night," and at the end of the lyric sheet LUNGLANCE wishes us in English, "peace and gloomy destruction." (Cissie) (7-song CD, lyrics included. David Cammal, résid Verdière, av Frères Roqueplan, 13370 Mallemort, FRANCE. lunglance.free.fr)

MEHKAGO N.T. – Pretty basic, heavy hardcore with a metal influence. The songs are generally fast straightforward tunes with a dark feel due to the heavy bass presence and helped by the deep growling vocals. The best song is the last track which is a five minute epic that has a good gut-rumbling slow part that alternately builds up then lets down again several times. (Pete) (5-song CD, lyrics included. 511 S. Royal Poinciana Blvd. #106, Miami Springs, FL 33166. mehkagont .com)

PERDITION – Another noisy blast of primitive, Scandi-styled hardcore. Nothing original but it sounds like timeless, angry, hardcore punk. You can tell that time, effort, and heart were invested

in this release. There is a brief little diatribe on the insert about how punk has lost its anger and willed itself into a homogenized turd that made me proud to be a punk. Keep it up! I'm also amazed how respectively good this sounds seeing as it was recorded on a boombox. (Justin) (6 song cassette, lyrics included, $2. Ian graye, 48-53 44th Street, Apt 3C, Woodside, NY 11377, projectileppuke@ yahoo.com)

PUTREFACTION – These Irishmen seem to be taking influence from the Swedish wall-of-sound style and the late '80s UK metallic punk scene. In the modern age, this is a hard task, because the style has pretty much been done to death. Fortunately, PUTREFACTION's demo proves that they are taskmasters. It stands up to any record from this genre that I've heard recently. The songs' arrangements are interesting, and the balance between heaviness and punk-ness is near perfect. They also have enough cool weird bits and stops thrown in to hold my attention. Furthermore, it states in the liner notes, "for the punx." I don't think I'm gonna hear a better demo this month. (Cissie) (9-song CD or cassette, lyrics included. Œ 3 or $4 ppd. 11, Orchard TCE, Grangegorman, Dublin 7, Ireland, direwolf@riseup.net)

THE RAMJAC – It seems like just about every band that's ever existed has a modern doppelganger, and THE RAMJAC is the contemporary take on NATION OF ULYSSES. Well, it's a little bit weirder and it's more electro-oriented, but the vocals and delivery scream falling-on-the-floor-sassy-boys-in-suits. The activity book included is a neat little addition and further reassures me that this band has fully inspected the NATION OF ULYSSES back catalog. (Cissie) (9-song CD, lyrics included. myspace.com/theramjac)

RAZOR BOIS – This is basic punk with no frills. It sounds like early '80s mid-west hardcore mixed with typical street punk. The guitarist utilizes the three-chord formula and is backed by solid, up-tempo drumming. The vocals are yelled and the band uses a bunch of gang backing vocals. (Pete) (6-song CD and 1 video, lyrics included. daddydamage @gmail.com)

SAM WEIR – Here we have a three song pop-punk demo. The band sounds just like this band that was called MY PAL TRIGGER who, ten years ago, were trying to sound just like JAWBREAKER but didn't. They also sound a bit like early DISCOUNT but with a guy singing or maybe a wimpier version of J CHURCH (that's kind of hard to believe though, isn't it?) Regardless of all that, they play mid to up-tempo, pop punk with lots of octaves and simple but catchy lead guitar parts and a vocalist who sings with a harsh sore throat sound. (Pete) (3-song CD, lyrics included. No address)

SENTINEL – SENTINEL plays simple, thrashy, sloppy punk rock. The songs utilize the basic power-chord and up-beat drumming to back the female screamer that sounds kind of like the woman from JACK ACID. The band burns through the four songs pretty quickly with no frills (unless you count the attempts at cheesy guitar soloing as frills). (Pete) (4-song CD, lyrics included. sentinel@minorthreat.com)

SKULL COLLECTOR – This sounds a lot like the motorcycle that is driving past my window right now. The tape must have been recorded on a boom box and then transferred through several different tapes, making it a bit hard to tell what's going on. The band plays heavy hardcore, starting off with bursts of blast beats and then trudging through slow, bass heavy breakdowns while one of the guys lets out deep, guttural groans. (Pete) (3-song Cassette, lyrics included. xgetoffmybackx @yahoo.com)

THEE SEDITIUS – Italy's THEE SEDITIUS plays sing-a-long melodic hardcore—snotty vocals, slick production, choppy and big sounding guitars, and all the other expected attributes. There are some weird group back-ups and some party sounding moments in the song "D.D.D."—sounds like a fun time. (Cissie) (4-song CD, no lyrics included. theeseditius@lycos.it, theeseditius.cjb.net)

WEEKEND WARRIOR – Ok, I don't know where to start, this band is all over the place. Definitely hardcore with thrash parts and slow parts. Picture kids who got into CHARLES BRONSON when they were 15, and then five years later got really good at there instruments and started a band. Thoughtful political lyrics about gentrification and bikes. Check it out for the Kid Millionaire caricature. (Eric) (6-song CD, lyrics included. prefers trades, $3ppd U.S, $5ppd World: 2421 Valley View Dr Los Angeles, CA 90026)

WOMEN – Simple rockin', mid-tempo punk. The guitar is reminiscent of TEEN-GENERATE while the vocals are total rough snot. If THE REGULATIONS came through their town they would play together. If they came through my city I would give them a firm handshake, say thanks for coming, and hand them five dollars for gas. Great stuff I can't wait for a record. Go! (Eric) (5-song CD, no lyrics included. $3ppd: 331 Mercy St. Philadelphia, Pa 19148, email: Sean, byrne81@hotmail.com)

ZENOCIDE – Holy crap is this crushing! This Japanese band crawls down the long road of doom like there's no other way to go. This is slow and heavy as fuck which instantly churns up sonic similarities to country-mates CORRUPTED with an added layer of noises and delay (that may be partly due to the rawness of the recording), that adds an awesome new level of power and grit to already great songs. If you're into bands like SUNN O)), ASUNDER, or BURIED AT SEA but are tired of the smarmy hipster baggage that that scene now tows, I assure you, you won't be disappointed with this release. (Justin) (3-song CD, no lyrics included. raw.9crust@docomo.ne.jp)

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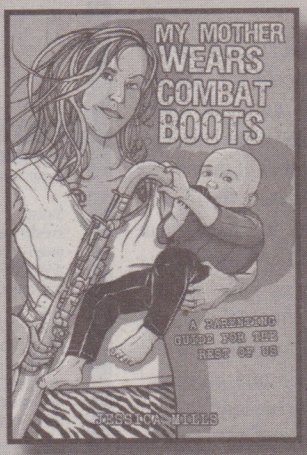

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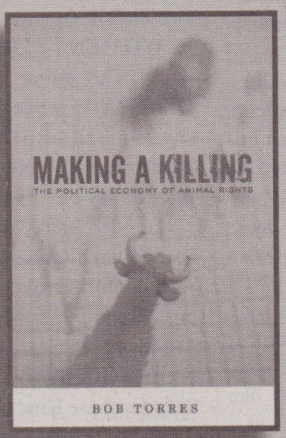

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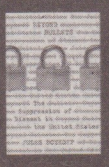

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ALWAYS NEVER FUN #2 / $2 ppd or trade
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 54 pgs
Visually, this is New Zealand zine is excellent—the best execution of the cut 'n' paste style I've seen in a while, with tons of drawings, photos, flyers, and a hilarious news clipping from an "expose" on a benefit show for G20 protesters. Hmm, I suppose it has nothing to do with the zine, but the article (with the headline "Revealed: Drug-fuelled party to raise funds for G20 thugs") mentions that at the protest "police were bitten" (woah!), and the show "raged until the early hours"—sounds like a blast! Anyways, with the layout setting such an impressive standard, the actual content doesn't *quite* live up (and is sometimes a bit hard to make out as well), but *Always Never Fun* is a pretty damn good read nevertheless. There are brief interviews with Kykloopien Sukupuutto, Warkrime, Tenderizor, and some interesting pieces of writing on a local venue and somebody who tried to cut down a tree that was a symbol of oppression against the native Maori. Highly recommended. (CS)
70 Owen St. / Newtown / Wellington / New Zealand
stunsmas@yahoo.co.nz

COPPERBONES #2 / $2 ppd or trade or tape trade
4.25 x 5.5 – copied – 24 pgs
Felt like I had to be smoking on the porch while reading this. So much care has been given to the production, and it looks really beautiful. I'm so glad somebody out there cares about how things look and sound, and isn't in a rush to just put something out, like so many people these days. Perfectly composed little paragraphs with torn edges for borders, indistinct memories ranging from a summer at vacation bible school to holding the best friend's tiny baby for the first time. It is interesting that there is such a jump in time, from being a kid to having one yourself, and even those moments aren't necessarily the main focus. There's a feeling of time lost, with an enormous, earnest sense about moving forward. Not very long but very pretty to look at, and what is there, is genuine. (JB)
c/o Madmartigan / Von Secret / PO Box 85 / Portland, Maine 04112
goonkid@hotmail.com

DISTORT #16 / $3
11.5 x 8.5 – copied – 18 pgs
This straightforward hardcore zine covers several new bands as well as old, however, not all the interviews and reviews are original material. The author has included excerpts he found of reviews of the Velvet Underground, as well as a Poison Idea interview from 1990. There is a long interview with Fucked Up that the author seems to have put a lot of time into, and is an enticing read. I'm not sure if the Clockcleaner interview is authentic to the author either, as it is cited as being from the "Terminal Boredom Interview." Despite the author's lack of his own work in this zine, I appreciate his attitude. His record reviews are introduced with the sentiment that they were not written to be about collecting records, but merely to recommend music. Refreshing to hear! (MJ)
DX / PO Box 239 / North Carleton / VIC / 3054 / Australia
distorttheworld@gmail.com / www.culthardcore.com

DOLL #243 / $?
10.5 x 7.5 – printed – 138 pgs – Japanese
So I guess it is my turn to recite what I can dig out of *Doll*. Fun, rock and roll magazine featuring a big Ramones spread, in full color with what I assume to be an oral history about the beloved Ramones, or maybe just Johnny (can't quite tell,) by some former friends and groupies—the likes of Linda "the bitch" Ramone, Mandy Stein, and Henry Rollins. No PJ Soles though, bummer. I will try to get at least a partial translation out of one of my more world-ly, bi-lingual friends. The list of other bands covered is extensive, but here is a sample anyway: High on Fire, The Sweat, Glitter Klinik, New Bloods (Yay!!!), Link 13, Guitar Wolf, Bad Brains, and tons of photos, ads, and reviews. I kinda thought it was mostly garage-rock oriented, but this issue is all over the rock map. (DS)
No. 303 Aota Bldg / 3-1-9 / Kita / Kohenji / Suginami- Ku / Tokyo / Japan

DOWN WITH THE DRIVER #3/4 / free
8.5 x 7 – copied – 28 pgs
This zine is comprised mostly of reviews of ska shows, funny calendars (that waste way too much space), and comic strips. I don't wanna shit the hot-tub because the

writer is most definitely still in high school but what little actual text there was in these issues, was really hard to stomach. There was just no sort of image painted with any of the writing. Descriptions like "Ska'ttsmen. They're so cool!!" and "Modern Machines. They played some songs, and they didn't play some songs," tell me absolutely nothing. With time I'm sure this will improve and I feel bad slamming it but I have to tell it like it is. (JU)
Moose Press, 701 Pine Street, Athens, WI 54411

EQUALIZING DISTORT vol. 7, #4 / $?
8.5 x 11 – copied – 20 pgs
By now I'm sure everyone who reads the zine reviews pages knows that this zine is the print version of a radio show of the same name on Toronto's CIUT 89.5 FM. One of the things I really find charming and I like about Equalizing Distort is that unlike a lot of zines that always feature interviews with the usual suspects, there always seems to be one or more bands that I've never heard of. While I may not have any inclination in checking out their music, it's always nice to get a window into some smaller scenes that most folks don't even know exist. In this case it's an interview with a band called U-Lock Terror from Guelph, ON, Canada. Another high point of this issue is an incredibly thorough and interesting interview with Filip Fuchs of the long-running Czech hardcore band See You In Hell along with other interviews with Sexhead, and Defect Defect plus the usual record and CD reviews. (JU)
21 Foundry Avenue, Unit 5, Toronto, ON, M6H 4K7, Canada
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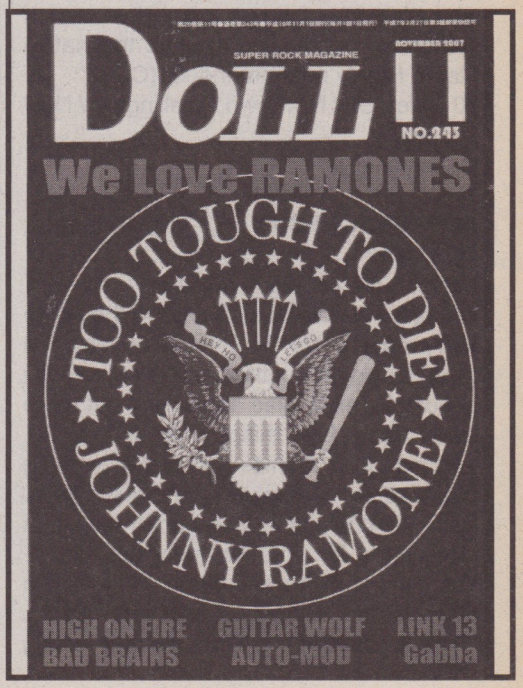
FAKE LIFE #4 / $2, free to prisoners
7 x 8.5 – copied – 38 pgs
This zine is written by a bunch of jaded old fat people. Besides the chauvinistic pussy talk, I found this zine refreshing. The writing is good and angry and self-deprecating. These people grew up punk and poor in bumfuck, Florida and are now in their forties. Many of them are recovering alcoholics and drug addicts. They feel left behind by punk, bewildered at its transformation from snotty and dangerous to folksy and political. They like bands with names like This Pipe Is Not a Pipe Bomb and Against Against Me. One of the writers is a black woman who doesn't even like punk, and wrote an article called "The Politics of Snitching." It was in response to a 60 Minutes show that accused the hip hop culture of glorifying non-cooperation with the police. Her response was not only can the police not be trusted because of their record of misconduct but that we have a long history of pop-culture references that demonize snitches. Ever see a mobster movie? *Hello!* Shame on CBS for their old-school dish of racism. *Fake Life*'s interviews are short one-pagers with authors and playwrights that bring out something personal and engaging about the interviewees, most of whom were Muslim or of Muslim background. The editors have taken an interest in the war and how it affects people at a human level. (DH)
PO Box 1174 / Tallahassee FL 32302
gomek@comcast.net

FREAK TENSION #13 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 20 pgs
I would put this zine in the "wing nut" zine category, that's not necessarily a bad thing either. The art on the cover is really awesome it reminds me of something that Daniel Johnston would draw. *Freak Tension* is filled with weird record reviews that sometime don't even talk about the records and show reviews that tell very humorous stories about bands in Minneapolis. By far the best part about this zine was the interview with John Doe from X when he was opening for The Wallflowers in 2000. (MP)
Matt Johnson / 4426 Chowen Ave S.101 / Minneapolis, MN 55410

INCOHERENCE #3 / $1 US, $2, or trade
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 24 pgs
This cool li'l zine is a quick read. Focusing mostly on the eclectic/noisier side of the music world, Andy seems to have a real passion for what he covers. The content runs the gamut from interviews with a two-piece thrash unit (Men Who Lunch) and a noise renaissance-man (Socialistic Jonny Goblet), to zine and record reviews that include noise, classic hardcore, and grind. I like that there so many different sub-genres of underground music covered here 'cause I know I like a lot more than just punk and it's nice to see other open minds rep-ing too. (JU)
Andy Ford / 622 Seminary-W'Burg Rd. / Collins, MS 39428

INITONIT #22 / **THIRSK FIRST** #? / 1.5 Pounds ppd UK, 3 Pounds ppd World
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 40 pgs
Split offering from two solid UK zines. *Thirsk First* dishes out a ton of columns, mostly on the shorter side, from folks that appear to have been kicking around the punk for awhile (read: this isn't the product of a buncha high-schoolers) but are still pissed about something, whether it be the BNP or plastic bags at the supermarket. There's some wrestling-themed content as well as a interviews with Russ Substance (of No Substance), Ram Raid the Offy, Homebrew, and Dutchess of York. *Initonit* is definitely lagging in the lay-out department but offers equally bile-



York. *Initonit* is definitely lagging in the layout department but offers equally bile-fuelled rants. There's also a Czech tour report from the Black Marias, interviews with Burn Subvert Destroy and Omerta, and record and zine reviews. Worth checking out. (CS)
PO Box 132 / Thirsk / Y07 1WR / United Kingdom

KEITH MAURONIKS MOST EXCELLENT EUROLAND TRAVAILS #1 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 36 pgs
Usually I find tour diaries to be pretty interesting, especially ones from Europe. The band that this zine follows is from Canada, and they describe a lot of bar shows and staying in hotels. It is just not the kind of touring I am used to or find interesting. From what I could read of the hand writing it seemed to be well written. You might love it! I don't. (MP)
Scissors and Glue Ink / Box 21-260 Adeleide St. E. / Toronto, Canada MSAINI

KILL OR MAIM #1 / $3 or trade
8.5 x 11 – copied – 12 pages
Kill or Maim is a compilation of various Australian hardcore/punk zines. The parties involved get the chance to condense their content to two concise pages. Contributors to this issue are *Cows and Beer*, *Thrillhouse*, *Feminista*, *Dumb Hardcore*, *What Gives*, and *Distort*. The overall vibe I get from this compilation is that the retro bug has bitten Australia even worse than the US. Most of these zines are named after song titles and the writers talk in song lyrics, such as when Daniel from *Distort* refers to something as a "bummer bitch" and Admo from *Cows and Beer* says he wants to move from his town "just to get away." There are several more instances of this, which I find kinda hilarious but also ridiculous. Although most of these zines mention, review, or interview current bands (Let's Grow, Straightjacket Nation, etc.), early-'80s fetishism runs rampant. *Cows and Beer* features a list detailing Admo's favorite Dead Kennedys' songs, *Thrillhouse* editorializes on the author's love for the first Adolescents LP, *Dumb Hardcore* gives us a vintage interview with DYS in addition to reviews of obscure '80s hardcore, and *Distort* mixes the author's old and new "cult" favorites in his usual, unique and caustic manner. The quality of the content in *Kill or Main* is uneven, which is to be expected in a compilation. However, I really enjoyed some of the pages, *What Gives* being the standout. That said, this is a cool concept and I will look forward to reading the next installment. (CI)
DX / PO Box 239 / North Carlton / Vic 3054 / Australia
culthardcore.org / distorttheworld@gmail.com

NO HOPE #4 / $3
7.25 x 11.75 – copied – 48 pgs
Trashy, gross humor has its place, sure. I find that trashy and gross can accentuate wit or outrageousness to fine ends, as Peter Bagge, Chester Brown, Mykel Board, et al. have done. This particular pile of trashy, gross comics did not resonate with me in any kind of humorous way, sadly. There are comics about boogers, oversize dicks, and weirdo losers, along with a long, fake horror filmography. There's no ads and a lot of material if this type of thing sounds fuckin' ace to you. Technically, the work is executed well, but the material seems a waste of his effort. (JM)
Jason Dean / 5 St. Dials Road / Old Cwmbran / Gwent, NP44 3AN / United Kingdom
deanjason143@aol.com

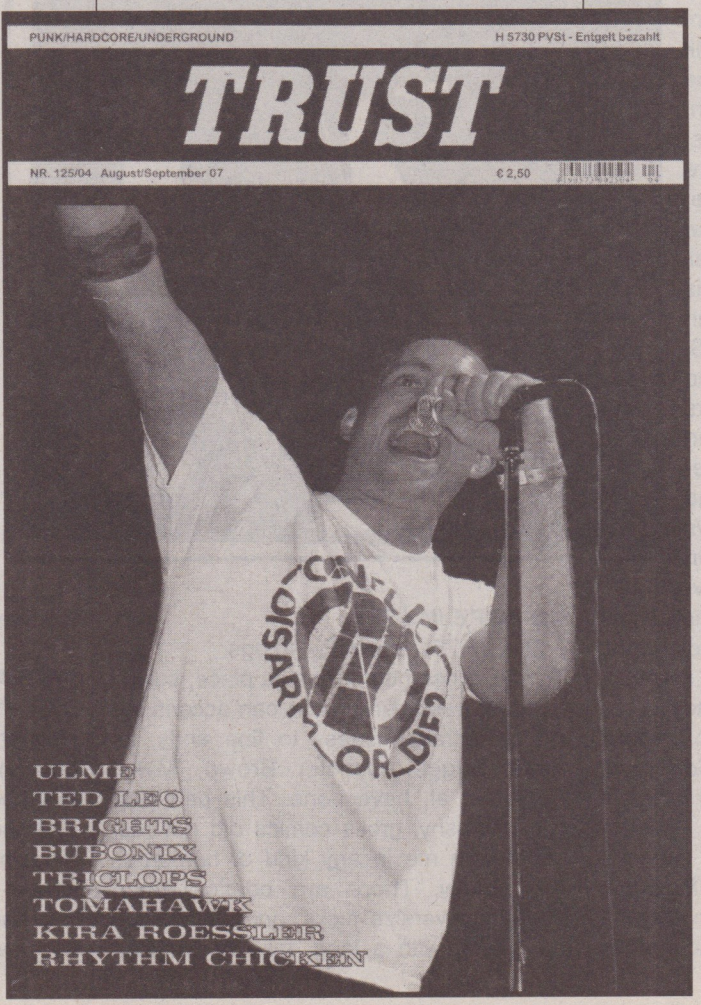
PRISONER'S DILEMMA #2 / 2$
7 x 8 – copied – 44 pgs
Lately, in my own life I've felt conflicted about self-defense, realizing my non-violent stance will be ineffective in demoralizing or life threatening situations. At times, I've even toyed with the idea of gun ownership. Then along came this issue of *Prisoner's Dilemma – rethinking self-defense,* to address some of my own questions. An interview with the editor of *American Gun Culture Report*, was the first thing I chose—a pro-guns and politically accurate zine that I will read again. That was featured right after a piece on Home Alive, a non-profit, radical self-defense realization center in Seattle. Highlights from the Anarchist Book / BASTARD conferences included some thoughts regarding relative controversies and contradictions you may have read about in recent other publications. *Prisoner's Dilemma* opens with intros for two noble editorials also centered on the subject of self-defense. My only complaint is that the articles were both to be continued on designated pages, but managed to blend until I realized that the continuations were noted incorrectly. I still don't have it sorted out entirely. Otherwise superb! (DS)
Prisoner's Dilemma / PO Box 95006 / Seattle, WA 98145-2006
prisonersdilemma@riseup.net

PROFANE EXISTENCE #54 / $5
8.5 x 11 – printed – 84 pgs
Holy shit! This magazine only comes out once in awhile but it's worth the wait. The featured artist for this issue of *PE* is Fly and the entire issue is covered in her amazing work, along with a huge interview where she talks about all the crazy shit she had done. I had seen Peops before but now I have to check out all her other

comics. Another exciting part is the C.L.I.T. Fest RVA report with a lot of good pictures of women rocking out as well as a short overview of the shows and the workshops given. It sounds like the workshops were the biggest hit, there was a panel discussion on porn that I really wish I could have been at, seeing as how it's a subject I think a lot of people feel strongly about and are afraid to talk about. I'm glad this particular festival has been highlighted. It's really satisfying to hear that Dan (the main mover and shaker for the mag) is really commited to keeping the magazine running even if it means sacrificing the record label and the distro. Print is seeing such a violent decline and we need good magazines like this! Keep up the good work! Additionally there are interviews with Mischief Brew, INHASTE, Human Error and a scene report from Umea, Sweden as well as a bunch of vegan recipes, columns and reviews. (JB)
Profane Existence / PO Box 8722 / Minneapolis, MN 55408

RAD PARTY #38 / $3 international or trade
4 x 6 – copied – 160 pgs – French
This zine is all in French! Who the hell at *MRR* thought that I could read French? Anyway, I brought it home and got out the ole pocket dictionary and the 501 French Verbs book and went to town!... or shall I say *ville*? The grammar and sentence structure is very similar to Spanish so I was making good headway, but unfortunately I ran out of time. But what I did read was *magnifique*. Rad Party is a story zine about skateboarding late at night, getting hurt and being laid up, growing older, and the personal side of being in the punk rock world. It is beautifully handwritten and illustrated with B&W line art. All the stories have English titles like "Bad Time for a Get Away," "Waking Up to an Empty Night," "Cold Blood and Fresh Ink," and "Bills Scattered in the Yard," which set the mood of the zine. If you read French, get this. How often do you see a European zine that's not just about music? A real *tour de force*. (DH)
Rad Party c/o Stéphane Delevacque / 9 Bis Grande Rue Charles de Gaulle / 92600 Asnièrs Sur Seine / France.
Burninghopes@hotmail.fr

RADIO REZIJA #1 / ?
8.5 x 11.5 – printed – 48 pages
All I can say is *holy shit* this is an awesome zine! Especially for a first issue—this is very impressive. From Skopje, Macedonia and about 1/3 is written in that language, but the rest is in English. These guys do an incredible job of covering worldwide hardcore/punk, not just from the Balkans and Eastern Europe, but all over—small features on bands from South America, Asia, etc. Alternation, Face up to it, Sotatila, Yogyakarta, Fractura, Final Approach, Speak Our Minds, Vaseline Children, Hell Patrol, Evazija, and tons more are interviewed or featured. There is an awesome Russian scene report that is very in depth. There are a bunch of ads and contact info for labels that I didn't even know about! An excellent DIY resource!! Rock on! (NM)
Arso Mickov 23 / 1060 Skopje / Macedonia



RAZORCAKE #40 / $4 US
10.5 x 8 – printed – 112 pgs
I heartily enjoyed this issue of *Razorcake*, mostly because it covered several topics that I didn't realize how much I wanted to read about. I was especially glad to see an article by Jennifer Whiteford about punk rock and exercise. As a former competitive athlete and present gym attendee, I can't understand how being vegan and riding your bike is considered punk but going to the gym like everyone else is selling out. It was nice to see that someone else noticed the ridiculousness of this, and embraces exercise as well as punk rock. I also really got a kick out of Maddy Tight Pants's column this month on her reasons for "When Not to Write A Zine"—mostly because I agree with every point she makes. Yes, you should not write a zine about: your bike, veganism, or to "set the record straight" about your breakup. Zines on these issues could not be a quicker way to make me fall asleep, or in some instances, jab a pen through my eye socket. *Razorcake* also has some nifty band interviews: for those of you who missed them on their US tour with The Queers, an interview with Ramones-style band from Italy The Manges! Also featured are Black Time, The Love Me Nots, and Dan Padilla. (MJ)
Razorcake/Garsky Press, Inc. / PO Box 42129 / Los Angeles, CA 90042

SO IT GOES... / $?
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 22 pgs
Although I did not share in her enthusiasm for attending a Democratic party gathering at the beginning of the zine, a few pages later I did find the lowdown on vaginal maladies involving yeast and bacteria growth interesting. These are the same organisms responsible for making beer, yogurt and sauerkraut, and after reading about the symptoms, it makes sense. Frothiness, clumpiness and odor are these organisms' MO. There is also a vegan recipe section. Would it not be great if there was an article on fermentation to segue the two to show that yeast and bacteria can also be our friend and used for good? There are also two reviews on abortion movies and a list of cool websites to check out such as bigvagina.com,

gladrags.com, and myvag.net. The zine ends with a well-written, heart-breaking story of her grandpa's attempted suicide brought on by his Miss Piggy-like wife and his being reduced to wearing menstrual pads for leakage. (DH)
Jess / 2163 Hoople Street! / Fort Meyers, FL 33901
sickwithoutthought@yahoo.com

TOOTH WORM TASSEOGRAPHY #2 / $?
4.5 x 5.5 – copied – 36 pgs
You know those personal zines that start stories kind of in the middle, and detail living here and there, having friends, drinking whisky, etc.? This one is slightly less lucid than, say, older issues of *Brainscan*, but more intelligible than those that are basically a vehicle for a fancy screened cover. I liked it all right, though I wouldn't buy one. If you can't get enough of that sort of thing, then you are stoked with this. It is the second printing, so forget picking it up for resale. Books are reviewed, drunkenly, and the editor's dad contributes detailed diagrams about how to get your fishing line ready for action. (JM)
toofworm@gmail.com

THE TROUBLE WITH NORMAL #84 / $2 ppd or trade
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 48 pgs
The Trouble With Normal, which hails from Columbia, Missouri, is coming upon its 15-year anniversary. That's quite a feat by anyone's standards. It makes sense that *The Trouble With Normal* started in the '90s as it definitely has the feel of that era. The music covered is diverse and the zine's author, Boone, is coming from an optimistic, semi-political perspective. The first half of *The Trouble With Normal* is show reviews, which Boone approaches as a timeline for his fleeting year. Next, we get two interviews, one with I Object and the other with No Means No. The zine is rounded out by record reviews and an opinion piece derailing the Bush administration and the Iraqi war. I have to admit that I found a lot the content to be very bland. I am not interested in most of the music covered by Boone, and the show reviews did not really have enough interesting anecdotes to hold my attention. However, the interviews are decent and worth reading if you like the bands. I applaud the fact that Boone has been writing this for 15 years, and it's apparent that he has a genuine passion for it. If you are from the Columbia, Missouri area, or if you are a fan of I Object or No Means No then this is suggested reading. (CI)
Boone / PO Box 1444 / Columbia, MO 65205-1444
thetroublewithnormal.tripod.com / ttwn@hotmail.com

TRUST #125 / ?
8.5 x 11 – printed – 60 pages – German
In terms of German punk mags, *Trust* has long been one of the best. It certainly is one of the longest running. Somewhere between a Deutsch *MRR*, *Doll*, *Razorcake*, and *Big Takeover* rolled into one, there is something of interest to everyone here. They cover underground punk and fairly tepid indie rock. This issue explores some stuff about Christian punk. Interviewed are Ulme, Ted Leo, Bubonix, Tomahawk, Triclops, plus reviews, show info, etc. All in German. (NM)
Postfach 11 07 62 / 20067 Bremen / Germany

UPHEAVAL #12 / stamp or $1
8.5 x 11 - copied – 2 pages
AH! Craig has returned. *Upheaval* has been on a hiatus for a while and has come back covering all that's cool in international HC/crust/punk. The new version is a one sheet, both sides printed—always a great source for finding out about new bands from all over the world. Welcome back! Get your copy. (NM)
PO BOX 301426 / Jamaica Plain / MA 02130

WELCOME TO FLAVOR COUNTRY #12 / $1 or some stamps
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 30 pgs
This writing style of going on and on, just laying it all down is not my favorite. Bible stories and characters from various bible books are referenced throughout too, eh, um, erg…That is not the sum of the writer's words, but I just wouldn't get too involved because I am repelled by Christian themes. From what I gather, he is a student of religious studies or anthropology of that nature…maybe like a voyeur type. There was a part of the story that ventured into support group interactions involving a schizophrenic and another with bi-polar disorder which seems to be a topic that many of *MRR's* readers can get into; in fact, putting it that way has me wanting to reread *Welcome to Flavor Country*. I must have missed something. (DS)
Kurt Morris / 8820 Stone Ave N. #301 / Seattle, WA 98103
welcometoflavorcountry@gmail.com

XEROGRAPHY DEBT #22 / $3
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 48 pgs
Xerography Debt is a review-and-columns zine that declares itself "for zine readers by zine writers." This zine lives up to its promise. For people interested in the history of zines, zine-making, good zines to read, and just a general forum to discuss self-publishing, this is a good zine to start. If you're a fan of *Stolen Sharpie Revolution* or other zines that are prescriptive to the zine lover, this is for you. (MJ)
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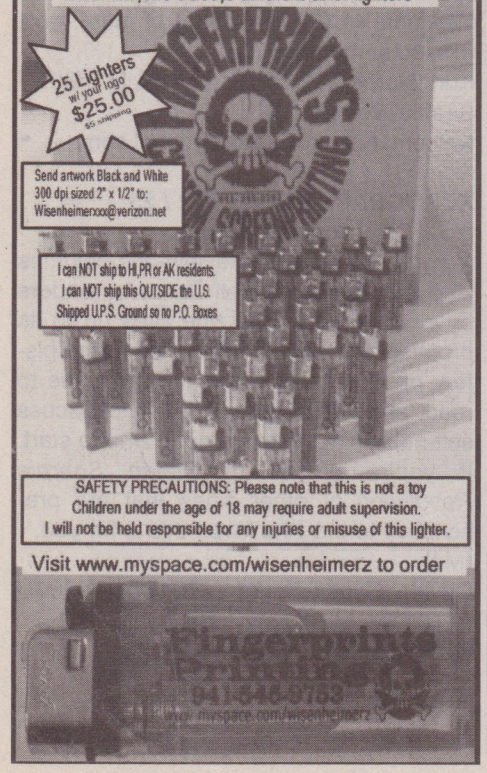

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Saturday 24 $7
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Saturday 08
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Friday 14
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MY NAME IS RANDY CORDERO but all of my friends call me Joker 'cause of my "Live Young at Heart" personality. I'm a 31-year-old punk rocker from Whittier, California. Born and raised in the Los Angeles punk scene since I was about 8. I'm into all kinds of bands like A-18, Verbal Abuse, Social Unrest, Subhumans, DRI, Fear, Etc. I'm badass at drawing and I love tattooing, shootin' pool, skateboarding, camping, fishing, gigs, action, and scary movies and some philosophy. I get out in a year so put that pen to paper and write me. Randy Cordero #T-37551 / SATF D-1 #205 / PO Box 5242 / Corcoran, CA 93212

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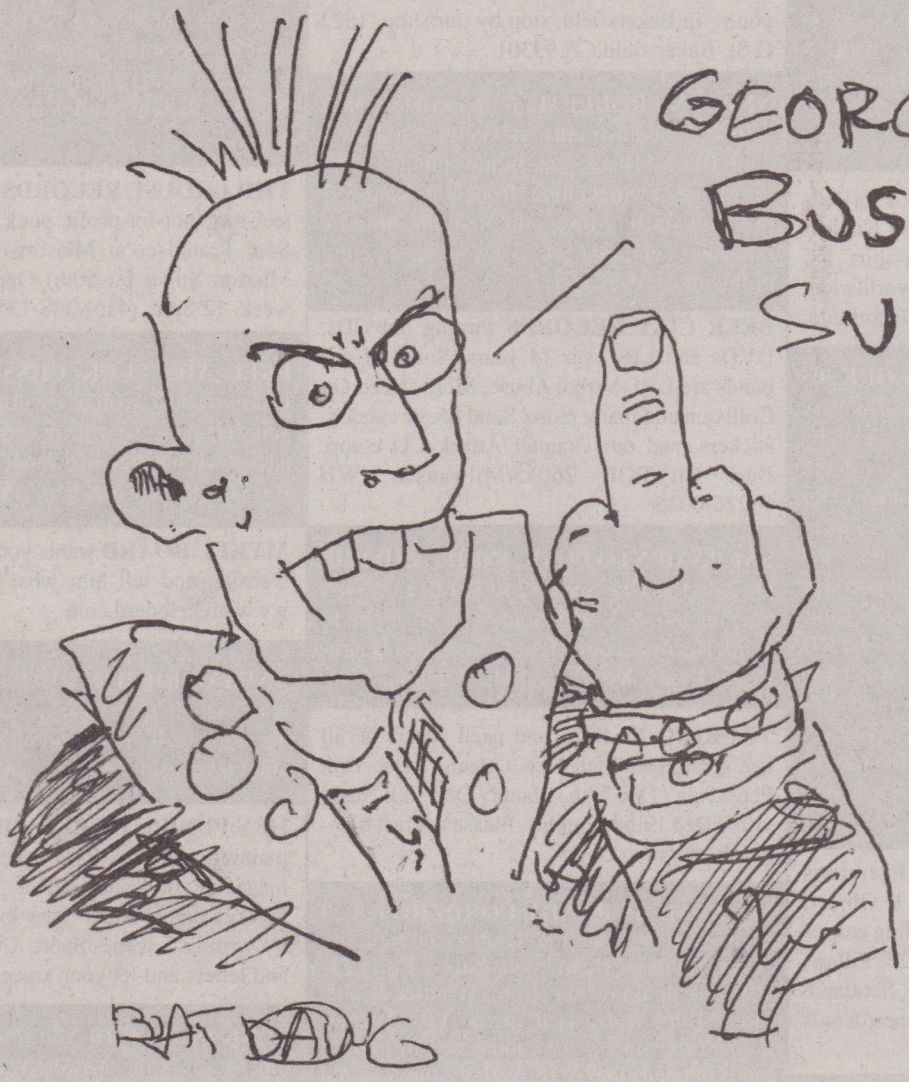

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